



THO.^S TYERS ESQ.



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AN
HISTORICAL RHAPSODY
ON
MR. P O P E.

By the EDITOR of
THE POLITICAL CONFERENCES.

THE SECOND EDITION,

CORRECTED AND ENLARGED.



LONDON,
PRINTED FOR T. CADELL, IN THE STRAND.
MDCCLXXXII.

[PRICE TWO SHILLINGS.]

282

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HISTORICAL RHAPSODY

ON

MR. POPP E.

By the EDITOR of
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TO
THE QUEEN'S
MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY
THE FOLLOWING HISTORICAL RHAPSODY
ON MR. POPE,
THE GREATEST ENGLISH POET OF HIS TIME,
WHO WAS VISITED AND ESTEEMED
BY THE FATHER OF
HER ROYAL CONSORT,
IS MOST RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED,
BY HER MOST DUTIFUL
AND OBEDIENT SERVANT,
THOMAS TYERS.

TO

THE QUEEN

MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY

THE ROYAL COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS

ON THE 17TH

OF JULY

THE GREAT HALL OF THE COLLEGE

OF PHYSICIANS

AT THE HOUSE OF

THE QUEEN

IN MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY

MOST

BY HER MAJESTY

BY

AND HER MAJESTY

AND

THOMAS

THOMAS

ADVERTISEMENT.

IF I had adopted the hint of an intelligent acquaintance, this Rhapsody would have endeavoured to have found its way to Lord Mansfield and to Lord Marchmont, the two surviving executors and trustees of Mr. Pope. But I declined the thought of addressing it to any Man living, having obtained the permission of inscribing it to the greatest Lady in the three Kingdoms.

The writer hopes, that the influence of her Royal Name will introduce it into the highest company, and that it may have the good fortune of obtaining the more friends, on the account of Her, who has not an enemy in the world.

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Pro-

Protected by the title of this Essay, which disdains method, the writer has said something of every thing that has the most distant relation to the Life and Writings of Mr. Pope. He has laid before the reader all the anecdotes, observations, and reflections, which offered themselves for that purpose. Perhaps he has called off the Reader's attention from the main subject, by a profusion of quotations, which occasion tautologies, to remark the pains that are taken to record what other people have said. Memory, like a coy female, has suffered herself to be wooed, but not to be compleatly won. By turning to the original authors, many errors are discoverable, though no very important ones. The Essay has, without design, all the negligence of conversation, instead of the correctness

ness of a classical performance. But this composition is not for the Learned, for they are above it; it is only for those who love to be amused, and are fonder of warm sentiments than of grammatical perfection. In the Summer season, the season when this was written, a green lane and a verdant track, no matter how much out of the way, are better than the turnpike road; and a little deviation to the right and to the left may give more delight to the fancy than the geometrical nearness of strait line. The pleasure of the writer it to please the reader. He has no mercenary views. He "asks but the cheap reward of empty praise;" which if he cannot honestly obtain, it will be enough for him to hope to avoid censure for what he has written, and to offend no more.

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but the cheap reward of empty praise,
which if he cannot honestly obtain, it
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to stand no more.

ADVERTISEMENT TO THIS EDITION.

THE Rhapsodist is glad of the opportunity of sending abroad another edition, with correction and enlargement. He has at last done with his *Hero*, with whom he was more likely to tire the reader than himself. Thanks to Voltaire, who pulled the check-string! for he denounces "woe to him, who says all he knows upon any subject!" If this collection of anecdotes and quotations has been without a number of admirers, it has not wanted readers, who have fairly confessed, that they have received entertainment from the perusal. It is the greatest praise of a composition, that it can interest the eye or the ear, from the beginning

to the end. There is no charge against this pamphlet for being the offspring of party that discolours every thing, or of want that puts the pen into the hand. A production of this sort, as Pope says of poetry and criticism, "is the affair of idle men who write in their closets, and of idle men who read there." The hope, whatever became of the expectation, which was indulged of pleasing every body, has not vanished in pleasing nobody. Though the summer melted the pen in the hand of the essayist, the winter has not frozen his ink nor his inclination to prepare a second impression for a reperusal, and to preserve some traditionary circumstances that were going down the stream of time into the lake of Oblivion. Some weeks ago, the second volume of Dr. Warton made it's appearance, as fore-

told

told in this publication. It is a work calculated for the entertainment of scholars, and will have all for its admirers who are able to become its readers. *This* is intended to convey a popular account of the man and the Poet ; the *other*, is a description of his genius, and contains judicious remarks on his performances. *This* is an historical Rhapsody, the *other* a critical one. *One* is for the English and unlearned readers, of both sexes ; the *other* for the skillful in the languages.

[11]

Now in this publication. It is a work
dedicated for the enlightenment of the
masses, and will have all for its object
who are able to follow its teaching.
It is intended to convey a popular
account of the life and the work of the
author, in a description of his writings
and contains a list of his works on this
subject. It is an historical
sketch, the work a critical one. One
is for the reader and the other for the
of both parts; one for the reader
in the history.

HISTORICAL RHAPSODY.

IF an art or invention is to be estimated and praised in proportion to the pleasure it communicates to mankind, the greatest thanks are certainly due to poetry and to poets. In vain were they ordered to be banished from the commonwealth of Plato. Little has their importance in the world been lessened by the degrading assertion, that the inventor of a wheelbarrow has done more service to mankind, than the writer of the Iliad and the Odyfsey. The great Newton has passed his censure in vain, in declaring, that, "after all, he could not help agreeing with his friend Dr. Barrow, that poetry was ingenious nonsense." How inconsiderable are the number of the readers of Sir Isaac's noblest performances, in comparison

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with

with those of the Rape of the Lock, the letter from Elia to Abelard, and the Essay on Man ! It may be fairly confessed, that poetry is not an essential article in the commerce or support of life. It is only the treasure and delight of a few. Like gold, it can only belong to the fortunate, who can afford to keep it to themselves ; but prose, like money in small change, is every moment necessary to carry on the ordinary affairs and general purposes of the world.

I availed myself of a recess during the heat of the summer, to give scope to my old inclination, to sit down in order to recollect what I had read or been told concerning Mr. Pope. What the Essay is good for, now it is finished, is not for the writer to decide. Perhaps it may be thought rather an effusion, than a composition. He did not know, when he took up the pen, whether it would be long or short. It was meant to be written from memory, with rapidity, and without taking down authors from their shelves. The pen has not written intentional falsehoods. Indeed, there can be no incitement,

ment, at this distance of time, and on the present subject, for corrupt partiality, or base malevolence, *quorum causas procul habeo*. This sketch proved too large for one sitting. The writer became more and more in love with his subject, and his pen ran away with him. He returned to it again, and again, and has compleated his intention. He has shewn it to some friends, who have not said enough against it to prevent its publication. It is now laid, very respectfully, at the feet of the public.

This ground is trodden so bare, that no verdure can easily spring up. What has been performed by the classical Hurd, the industrious Ruffhead, and those captivating writers, Warton and Johnson, can hardly admit or require to be added to. The last author comes to Biography with all the talents of Longinus and Quintilian, and with all the entertaining power of anecdote to enrich his volume. *Sero venientibus ossa*. It is lawful, according to one of the oldest customs and privileges in the world, to glean what one can, after the rich harvest of others.

No poet of our times or nation has laid us under so many obligations as Mr. Pope. He has contributed highly to polish, to make more durable, and to fix the English language. But, a living language is incapable of being compleatly fixed. It is like the river in Horace, which never stands still, and, in the *representative versification* of the excellent Cowley, "which runs, and as it runs, for ever shall run on." He has done a great deal to improve our taste, and to correct our morals, as far as can be done by the magic of words. Nay, his satires are called the glorious supplement of our laws. The attraction of his poetry verifies the line of Herbert, "*a verse may catch him whom a sermon flies.*" It makes nothing against him, that from the moment our son of Apollo resolved to brandish his pen, he determined to dip it into Pactolus as well as Helicon.

Pope, as Lord Clarendon says of (the ever memorable) Hales of Eaton, was one of the least men in the kingdom; who adds of Chillingworth, that he was of a stature little superior to him; and, that it was an age,
in

in which there were many great and wonderful men of that size. Enough might be found of Pope's contemporaries, who were below the common standard, and whose talents of all kinds were equal to the most celebrated in the last century. But I have no desire to dignify a remark with examples of this sort, as the noble historian has done. Our Poet is Dick Distich, the president of the *little club*, in his own well-written paper in the Guardian (rivalled, but not excelled by Addison's institution of a Club of *tall men*), who has entertained so just a sense (he says) of the stature, as to go generally in black, that he may appear yet less. Nay, to that perfection is he arrived, that he *sloops* as he walks. The figure of the man, continues he jocosely, is odd enough; he is a lively little creature, with long arms and legs. A spider is no ill emblem of him. He has been taken at a distance for a small wind-mill. He inherited his deformity from his father, who turns out at last, from the information of Mrs. Racket, his relation, to have been a linen-draper in the Strand.

“ My friend, this shape which you and Curll
 “ admire,
 “ Came not from Ammon’s son, but from my
 “ fire;”

as he expresses himself, in the first edition of his epistle to Arbuthnot.

He was protuberant behind and before, in the words of his last biographer. But he carried a mind in his face, as a revered person once expressed himself of a singular countenance. He had a brilliant eye, which pervaded every thing at a glance. This disadvantageousness of figure he converted, as Lord Bacon expresses it, “into a perpetual spur to rescue and deliver himself from scorn, and to watch the weakness of others, that he might have something to repay them.” Some of his earliest opponents had the ill-natured rashness to exhibit “ *the libell’d person and the pictur’d shape.*” Pope, who was tremblingly alive all o’er, returned this disingenuous attack, and made them pay dear for their personal abuse. He was as resentful of an imputation of the roundness of his back, as ~~the~~ *the* ~~libell’d person and the pictur’d shape.~~ *the libell’d person and the pictur’d shape.* is reported to have been
 on

on the sarcasm of king William. Hay, in his Essay on Deformity, observes of himself, that he was the only deformed member of the House of Commons, that consists of 558 persons, yet had not that objected to him by his constituents: neither was he probably affronted on that account, in the House or out of it. The late Lord Temple could, through contempt or magnanimity, laugh at the ridicule of the libellers on the awkwardness of his figure. He had confessedly more dignity on his seat, than when he walked—*grace not in every step*. If there is any thing, said that good Englishman and great statesman, in the House of Peers, in my person, that can be of service to the scribblers on the other side, and get them a dinner, they are heartily welcome to it. The supposed inadvertent imputation of Atterbury, of a crooked mind in a crooked body, could not be intended to reach the ears of Pope, nor descend to mark his character to the present age. What is dropped in the heat of talk, or even in momentary dislike, ought not to be remembered or reported.

Pope can hardly be said ever to have been a child, though he was all his life requiring the help necessary for one. We never have heard of his rattle nor his hobbyhorse. But then we know but little of him till he was about ten years old. Undoubtedly he was put to read and to write as early as the infirmities of his infancy permitted. He was able to understand and to translate from Ovid and Statius, as soon as he could be well supposed to construe those authors. Voltaire, that universal genius, wrote verses from twelve to eighty-four, as observes that animated traveller Sherlock. L'Enclos left him a legacy for the prematurity of his poetry. He resembled (I am not sure that Voltaire does not somewhere apply this allusion) those trees that bear blossoms and fruit at the same time. His vein began to run as early, and flowed longer than any of the poetical tribe; though his rapid imagination (in the language of our great lexicographer), like the Peruvian torrent, when it brings down gold, mingled it with sand.

Pope

Pope wrote verses, such as are even still worth reading, as soon as Voltaire. "*He lisp'd in numbers, for the numbers came.*" So did Cowley. Doddsley gave Mr. Spence some poems of Pope of earlier composition than his pleasing Ode on Solitude, and many transcriptions, in the poet's typographical handwriting. His budding years, his love of reading, his passion for poetry, indulged and commended by his father, kept him at school, or under the parental roof at Binfield. Whilst he was under tuition at Hyde-park-Corner, he grew enamoured of Ogilby's Homer, on account of the story and the splendid engravings; and he warmed his fancy by going often to the playhouse, and acting a part in a play he had got up. He composed, while at his father's, an epic poem, called Alcander, which he threw into the fire (with a tragedy and a comedy, according to Ruffhead) on the advice of Bishop Atterbury.

The first we hear of him is under the patronage of Sir William Trumbul, who had been Secretary of State to king William,
and

and lived in his neighbourhood. His pastorals, composed at the age of sixteen, were his gentleman usher to introduce him to the acquaintance of the first men in the kingdom.

This species of composition, in which he equalled or surpassed every body else, was the last of his puerilities. To this melodious description of love, the seasons, and of fictitious manners, transcribed from his poetical predecessors, he was indebted for his first fame.

As it was precursory of his higher attempts, and perhaps necessary to them, what he has performed is not to be disrespected nor overlooked. *Me quoque dicunt vatem pastores, sed non ego credulus illis.* Sicily, according to that agreeable traveller Brydone, is as capable of bucolic poetry, as in the time of Theocritus, who was a native of Syracuse. But, surely, the occupation of the cowherds, of the husbandmen, and the vine-dressers, though you annex the sweetness of the Hyblean bees, and the melody of the birds in the fulness of song, will not compleat the image of perfect happiness; much less
of

of the imaginary golden age, which, if it could have existence any where, would be destructive of the active faculties of mankind, as Lord Kaims pronounces very justly in his Sketches of Human Nature. For the horrors of Mount Ætna will possess the imagination, and the danger from robbers and assassins incline us to think a pastoral life, even in that region, not a very secure or happy one.

Pope was now a man, amongst men. A boy keeping company with men, will soon become a man himself. By the concurring advice and encouragement of his patrons, and all who knew him, he was preparing to sing the wrath of Peleus' son. He was brought where he might see the world, and the world might see him. He was yet so green in years, that Ambrose Philips, a pastoral poet as well as himself, brought a birchen rod, for his correction, to Button's. He certainly had as little rubbish about him, as any man of his years, to use an expression of Sir Robert Walpole, on Mr. Legge. Having no profession to follow, he determined to commence

mence a poet in form. He left no calling for the idle trade. In the course of his life he made or found opportunities to be also a good antiquarian, and to give some specimens of his knowledge in architecture, as Ruffhead informs us.

The admirable Hogarth, as appears by an entertaining pamphlet just put out by Mr. Nichols the printer, took the liberty to expose our Poet for this affectation of knowledge, in a print still in being, where Pope is represented as white-washing Lord Burlington's house, and bespattering the Duke of Chandos, who was passing by. Hogarth wisely suppressed this publication, for Pope was commencing a prosecution against the print-seller. The story of Hipponax the poet, and Bupalus the painter, also might reach his ears, before it was too late. Pope applied a little to drawing and portrait painting under Jervas: of his skill in drawing, an elegant specimen is preserved, of Rome in it's decay, with some fine subjects for moralizing, interwoven in the piece, which is prefixed to an edition of the Essay on Man. He painted
a pic

a picture of Betterton, still in the possession of the Earl of Mansfield, for it was safe at his seat at Caen wood whilst the conflagration of June was destroying his furniture and library in Bloomsbury square, and that so effectually, that in the house of Peers he assured the Lords, he did not tell the law from the authority of books—for “God knows,” says that great man, in an affecting strain of eloquence, I have not a book left.”

Pope acquired a stock of Latin and Greek very early, which a moderate application enabled him to enlarge. He had a sufficiency of knowledge from books, and not too much. “If I had read as many volumes as you have done, said old Hobbes to a notorious bookworm, I should have been as ignorant as you are.” “You must have read, said a great Personage in his library to our English philologer, more books than any man in the kingdom.” “No, Sir—Dr. Warburton has read more. I have passed a great part of my life in observation and meditation.” It is marvellous that Pope was able to peruse so many

many books and to write so many, during his life, though it was not a very short one, considering his infirmities and the continual pain in his head, the region where wit and fancy are generated. Surely, he did not get some friend to read for him, as his learned commentator acknowledges he did, to save him from unnecessary fatigue? or, had he the learned eye of Magliabechi, to know what was in a book by it's title, the heads of the chapters, and the Index? He had the gift of so broad and sound an understanding, that, like the Tuscan order of building, it was strong enough to bear any superstructure. His reading was pursued, in the different stages of his life, for amusement and for improvement. His translation of Homer abstracted him, in a great measure, from much conversation, for several years, and confined him to the cultivation of a dead language, and to English versification. Lord Lyttelton puts it in the mouth of Boileau to observe to Pope, that a great Poet, so tied down to so tedious a translation as that of Homer, is "*a Columbus chained to an oar;*" and, that

that the editorship of Shakspeare (which Pope afterward undertook with more profit than reputation) was below him, and that his mind was unfit for the drudgery it requires. Not that the first employment was without it's pleasant hours. He who travels with Homer will see men and manners court- ing his observation, different from what he has been used to; will experience warmer climates and brighter skies, rivers, arts, and arms, foreign from modern European scenes and fashions, with which he may contrast them, and, if he is not in a hurry to return to his own fire-side and to old conversations, he must come back much entertained and instructed.

“ Ubi amatur, non laboratur,

“ Et si laboratur, labor amatur.”

He knew his reward in money and reputation would be considerable. The translation of Homer was the largest and greatest labour of his life. It filled up his longest days and his longest nights. When he had finished the Iliad, he began to decorate and to adorn his villa at Twickenham. He converted an excavation,
under

under the road into his Garden, into a Grotto, towards which the prince of Wales contributed some ornaments, Dr. Borlase, the great naturalist of Cornwall, and, as appears from some letters lately published, Sir Hans Sloane. It was forgot (in the first edition) to be observed, that Pope valued himself upon his skill in laying out a garden, and that he made the most of the ground that belonged to him at Twickenham. He who wrote so early in the Guardian on this subject, and translated Homer's description of the garden of Alcinous so deliciously,

“ (Four acres was th'allotted space of ground,
“ Fenc'd with a green enclosure all around,)”
must have had an imagination pregnant with picturesque nature, to which his exercise of the pencil must have contributed.

This writer had an opportunity of viewing Pope's garden and grotto, and should have seen the Poet himself, if he had been at home; for our Sibyl through his Elysian fields would have introduced us. An acquaintance, whom this Rhapsody converted into a friend, undertook to authenticate a
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a trifling circumstance of Pope's being surprized by some patrician company, whom he neither desired nor expected to see, and who broke in upon his privacy. To avoid them, he fled to his gardener, whom he directed to take him up in his arms, and convey him over his boundary, which he did, and escaped by this help from his intruding visitors, as Anchises did, by the strength of Æneas, from the flames of Troy. If this allusion is too important for the incident, the reader may be recommended to recollect the endeavours of Horace, a brother Satirist, to get rid of the *Impertinent Man*, whom it was so difficult to shake off, and from whom he was rescued at last by the interposition of Apollo. So lively an image of this spot is raised by Mr. Walpole, in his observations upon modern gardening, that my reader shall have it in his own words, which are always the best. "Mr. Pope undoubtedly contributed to form the taste of Kent. The design of the Prince of Wales's garden at Carleton-house was evidently borrowed from the Poet's at Twickenham. There was a little of affected modesty

deſty in the latter, when he ſaid, of all his works, he was moſt proud of his garden. And yet, it was a ſingular effect of art and taſte to impreſs ſo much variety and ſcenery on a ſpot of five acres. The paſſing through the gloom, from the Grotto, to the opening day, the retiring and again aſſembling ſhades, the duſky groves, the larger lawn, and ſolemnity of the termination at the cypreſſes, that lead to his mother's tomb, are managed with exquiſite judgement: and though Lord Peterborough aſſiſted him,

“To form his quincunx, and to rank his
“vines,”

theſe are not the moſt pleaſing ingredients in this little perſpective!”

Whiſt the pen is performing this office, I recollect that I was formerly told by a reſpectable intelligencer (who had the opinion from the noble Lord himſelf) that Lord Peterborough did not think his friend Pope ſo good nor ſo great a poet as Dryden.

Sir William Temple compoſes a popular eſſay, in 1685, under the title, *Of the Gardens of Epicurus, or, Of Gardening.* From ſpleen,

spleen, bad health, or despair of doing his country any important service, he resolved to have nothing more to do with public affairs, nor the intrigues nor duplicities of a court. He had the honour of compleating the triple alliance against France (would to heaven such an alliance were formed at this hour!) and of concluding the treaty at Nimeguen; on which subject, he says, Mr. Godolphin (afterwards the great minister in the splendid years of Queen Anne) wrote him word, (and told him, *if he compassed it, he would move to have his statue set up.* He fled from the metropolis (to which he was become as great a stranger as the man of Verona to Rome; and had already been unrepentently absent for five entire years) to write like a philosopher, and to live and die like one. He pays a devotional respect to the practice and principles of Epicurus (the Epicurus of Lucretius and Gassendi) and seems to make health of body and peace of mind his *chief good*; and, as Cheyne, in his chearful book on health and long life, expresses it of the necessity of exercise, *a part of his religion.* Hear the

poetical pupil of Temple, Matthew Green, under these inspirations :

“ And let my mind, beguil'd by talk,
In Epicurus' garden walk !
Who thought it heaven to be serene ;
Pain, hell, and purgatory, spleen.”

Sir William Temple did not retire, like Dioclesian, to raise cabbages at Spalatro. The abdicated prince (according to our last information from the excellent historian Mr. Gibbon) gave this memorable answer to old Maximilian, who invited him to re-assume the reins of government, and the imperial purple : “ If I could shew you the cabbages I planted with my own hands at Salona, I should be no longer urged to relinquish the enjoyment of happiness for the pursuit of power.” His leisure hours, like Temple's, were employed in building, planting, and gardening ; and so would Cowley's, if his life had been longer and his fortune greater. Temple introduced and cultivated grapes, (he mentions and boasts of his introduction of four sorts) and pears, and the choicest fruits from the warmer climates, which he brought

brought to perfection. "I would make you confess, says he in a letter to Wicquefort, were any favourable accident to bring you hither (and this age produces strange ones enough) that the fruits of my garden have another taste than those of my closet (meaning his account of the United Provinces) and will keep better than those of my embassies." He had told the pensionary De Wit, in 1671, "that he was better turned for making a good gardener than an able minister." He remarks, that "Homer's description of the garden of Alcinous in Phæacia, now Corfu, contains the justest rules and provisions, which can go towards composing the best gardens."

He lavishes on the garden of Moorpark in Hertfordshire, made by the Countess of Bedford, which lately belonged to that great seaman Lord Anson, all the hyperbole of praise. It had, in the course of thirty years, sustained much alteration; Sir William talks of it at that distance of time with as much rapture as of Milton's Garden of Eden, or of Tasso's enchanted garden of Armida. Temple, who is much inclined to admire the

works and wisdom of the Chinese (for Burnet describes him as a disciple of Confucius, and a Mandarin in religion), would have bestowed high commendation on the garden at Pekin; if he had perused the letter of the jesuit Attiret from thence, translated by Mr. Spence; the appetite for which fashion is roughly ridiculed in an heroic epistle to a great English architect. But, peace be to the memory of Sir William Temple! that good Englishman and accomplished character, whose love for a garden was so sincere, that he ordered his heart to be buried under his sun-dial, in his garden at Moorpark.

The Vale of Tempe, at the foot of mount Hæmus in Thessaly, the object of Virgil's enthusiasm, and which is so beautifully described by Ælian, must have been a charming spot, where Art was only the handmaid of Nature. This territory, according to all travellers, is now infested with every thing that is offensive and dangerous. The gardens of Aranjuez near Madrid (the Tempe perhaps of a future age) employ the delineating pen of Mr. Dillon, for the pleasure they af-

afforded him, "where Art and Nature go hand in hand with the most grateful and pleasing simplicity." If a name inferred merit, a piece of ground that was occupied by the noble Author of the Characteristics, at Ryegate, ought to have been a Southcote's, an Aislaby's, a Shenstone's, or a Pelham's, in miniature, for it was called, "All the world in an acre of ground." Some pretty lines of Andrew Marvel, upon his garden, press upon the memory, and call for transcription:

Fair quiet ! have I found you here !

And innocence your sister dear !

Mistaken long I sought you then

In busy companies of men——

Society is all but rude

To this delicious solitude.

He who accepted wages from his constituents at Hull (and he was the last representative who was literally a servant to the people), who borrowed a guinea immediately after he refused a thousand pounds of Lord Treasurer Danby, had probably a garden for meditation, and not for show.

Within less than half a century, *Nature*, *Pope*, and *Kent* (*Pope* would modestly have said, *Kent* and *Nature*), set the fashion for gardening (the art of gardening, in *Mr. Walpole's* phrase, is the art of creating landscape) that still prevails in England, and may be travelling through our northern counties into Russia, whither painting, statuary, architecture, and all the arts of life, are going or are gone; where perhaps, if there was a longer summer and a shorter winter, the enterprizing Empress might soon be able to give law to the whole world. What could not be perfected at Moorpark, at Bullstode, at Woodstock, or at Stowe, by the creative imagination and pencil of a *Brown*, who was heir to the taste of *Pope* and of *Kent*?

“ Where Wealth inthron’d in Nature’s pride,
 With Taste and Beauty by his side,
 And holding Plenty’s horn,
 Sends Labour to pursue the toil,
 Art to improve the happy soil,
 And Beauty to adorn.”

This stanza is from the title-page of *Mr. Whately's* book on gardening, and was written

ten by Mr. Frampton, a man of singular capacity, of extensive memory, and who preached very eloquently from the pulpit without notes. Before this subject can be parted with, it must be observed, that Milton, who, in the approved expression, seems, *with the prophetic eye of taste*, to have conceived, and to have foreseen modern gardening (for is not his pen a pencil in his fourth book ?) and that Pope, not a professional man, like *Le Nôtre*, or *Wife*, or *London*, increased the passion for the knowledge of laying out pleasure-grounds, and that the latter, by his practice and his poetry, has rooted out the taste for Italian and French frippery and High and Low Dutch grotesque.

Was Horace happier (merrier he probably was) at his villa on the Tibur, or Shakspeare on his Avon, than Pope on the banks of the Thames ? Pope had the necessary ingredients for placid pleasures ; a mind capable of meditation and reflection, and the possession of *retired leisure*, the greatest gift, says Hume, the gods have to bestow on mortals. Here I possess a rare felicity (the wish of all literary valetudinarians) says Pope,

“ Maintain a poet’s dignity and ease, ^{and not}
 “ And see what friends, and read what ^{they}
 “ books I please.” ^{which Pope may be}

In the year 1726 Pope had like to have been drowned, in returning, in a dark night, from Dawley to Twickenham, in Lord Bolingbroke’s coach and fix, which was overturned in a piece of water. Horace escaped being crushed to death, by the fall of a tree, in his garden, and was near visiting *the shades below*, as he describes the incident in an occasional ode. Pope was saved by the activity of the postilion, who broke the glass to get him out. He lost the use of two of the fingers of his left hand, and was under the care of Arbuthnot and St. André. So near was the public being deprived of his valuable life!

The philosopher, says the excellent Hurd, talks without experience; the man of the world, without principle. Pope became qualified as much as any man to understand, as well as to catch, the manners living as they rise. What he could only know in the abstract at Binfield (to hold an expression of the logicians) he knew in the concrete at Twic-

Twickenham. He there saw the moral scenes of life passing in review before his mind, as exactly as the beautiful objects on his river Thames, from his camera obscura. He undoubtedly got a great deal of knowledge by his ear, in which nothing was ever lost; as well as by his eye. Every body was glad to bring or give him information. He was acquainted with the great men of both sides. For as yet his poetry was of no party. Horace and Virgil kept not higher company than Pope did or might have done—"who once refused the visit of a Queen." If there was any thing of which he was totally ignorant, it was his own fault. For he stamped Lord Bolingbroke, his guide, philosopher, and friend, with a sort of omniscience; and says, that Warburton understood, though the only man in the world, as much as he. Yet, with all the advantages Pope enjoyed, his judgement on men is said sometimes to have deceived him. With the greatest opportunities of knowing mankind, says Tindal, in his History of England, he was a very bad judge of them. He allows him to have
been,

been, though not the greatest genius, yet undoubtedly the most pleasing poet that this or perhaps any other country ever produced. His uncle, the famous Dr. Tindal, spoke his opinion very freely of Pope, as deficient in the powers of imagination, which, joined to his detestation of his irreligion, occasioned his name to be mentioned three times in the *Dunciad*. In the latter part of his life, he seems to have confined himself to the men of opposition (for parties ran so high, that there was no neutrality in the nation), who met occasionally at his house, to concert their measures. We know his associates, for he describes them to be,

Chiefs out of war, and statesmen out of place.

It is worthy of observation, that there is no mention made of Mr. Pitt, though he had begun his career of eloquence and popularity. Lord Cobham, his uncle, who had his regiment taken from him about this time by Sir Robert Walpole, he praises lavishly. Pitt was in the highest opposition to the Minister, with Pulteney, Lyttelton, and Barnard, that prejudice or patriotism could inspire, and Pope chose

chose to commend them with all a poet's power. Pope is called, by Mr. Horace Walpole, the Inquisitor General. It may with truth be asserted, that there was no man who was not afraid of the stroke of his pen, or who dared to set him at defiance. Every body apprehended it might be his own turn next. He kept the whole kingdom in awe of him; as, Delany asserts, Swift did the kingdom of Ireland. Hear him in the frenzy and prodigality of vanity declare,

*Yes, I am proud to see
Men, not afraid of God, afraid of me.*

Paint to your imagination this diminutive and helpless mortal, requiring female assistance to raise him up in his bed; observe him sitting there, with his implements of writing placed about him, culling of phrases, and sorting of rhimes; committing every thing to paper that occurred in the conversation of the day; all the impressions of memory, and the roving of fancy, to adorn and create subjects for his poetry; whilst others slumbered and slept. Mr. Locke's advice, and his own sagacity, taught him to record his chance thoughts,

thoughts, which may be of the best sort, lest they should be lost, and never return again. His dictates and decrees from Twickenham had the effect of the *lettres de cachet* of the tyrannical Tiberius, dated from Caprea, which struck an universal panic, and became proscriptions of all whom he was afraid of, or were become afraid of him.

English history remarks, that it might seem wonderful, the world was so much in terror of Queen Elizabeth, an insignificant woman, without dignity, crooked in her person, and without teeth. But the fact is so. She governed, like Jupiter, by her nod; a despotism, mankind would now be more likely to laugh at, than to obey. I am not certain that Lord Chatham would not have been able to conquer America (and his last declarations were to enter the lists with her for that purpose) *with his crutch*, if he would seriously have set about it, with opinion on his side, that governs every thing.

If this performance regarded method, it ought to have been mentioned sooner, that Pope quitted Binfield in 1716, having completed

pleated his purchase at Twickenham. Respectful curiosity always delights to trace a great man through his changes of place and fortune. Mr. Melmoth, to whom this writer was introduced at Bath in April, tells us, in Fitzosborne's letters, that he visited the house in Windsor Forest, where Pope spent the earliest part of his youth, which recalled to his mind the juvenile poet, and his first patrons, who *used to bless the roof*. All pilgrimage to Binfield is now at an end, for the house is reported to be pulled down. Dr. Middleton, in his letter from Rome, acknowledges, that he amused himself with the thoughts of taking a turn where Cicero and his friends had held their *philosophical disputations*, or standing on that very spot where he had delivered some of his *famous orations*. Binfield could easily afford as many agreeable reflections to the imagination of a Melmoth. The house and grotto at Twickenham will awaken the most sluggish memory, and keep alive the idea of the poetical founder. There is no passing through the cloysters of Magdalen College, in Oxford, without casting

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an eye up to the study-window of Mr. Addison, from whence his genius first displayed itself. A leaf of bays transmitted from the tomb of Virgil, at Naples, and preserved in the desk upon which this Essay is written, would alone be sufficient to prevent the Roman Poet from fading on the memory. *Sed carmina major imago.* Let Pope inform my reader of his removal from Binfield to Twickenham, from a letter of Dec. 2, 1718. "The history of my transplantation and settlement, which you request, would require a volume, were I to enumerate the many projects, difficulties, vicissitudes, and various fates, attending that important part of my life: much more, should I describe the many draughts, elevations, profiles, perspectives, &c. of every palace and garden proposed, intended, and happily raised, by the strength of that faculty, wherein all great geniuses excel, Imagination. At last, the Gods have fixed me on the borders of the Thames, in the districts of Richmond and Twickenham. It is here I have passed an entire year of my life. One, that has once been a poet, was degraded

degraded to a translator, and at last, through mere dulness, is turned to an architect." Ruffhead acquaints us, that Pope intended his villa for Mr. Murray, now Earl of Mansfield, upon the easiest terms. Let the traveller continue to visit the reputed birth-house of our immortal Shakspeare. I have no desire to injure popular belief, nor future jubilees at Stratford, nor a scene of theatrical representation. But, an Oxford friend, old, learned, and orthodox enough for a mitre, (*of Maudlin's learned grove*) assured me, that conversing many years ago with the minister of the town, who, from his own retrospective knowledge, and his best inquiries, which included more than an hundred years, was able to give some account, induced him to conclude, that the wrong house was pitched upon for the birth-place of our great dramatic poet. Should it be asked, if this is a proof against a received opinion? I think not: let it then be treated, as hearsay of hearsay, and afford an opportunity of ridiculing this sort of evidence in the humorous lines of Prior, in his *Turtle and Sparrow*,

—— an honest Rook

Told it a Snipe, who told a Steer,
Who told it those, who told it her.

To return from this digression. When Dryden left off the poetical trade, Pope took it up. Dr. Beattie, in his Essay on Poetry and Music, balances the merits of Dryden and Pope; allows more originality to Dryden, but thinks the professed, happy, imitative powers of Pope put him upon a level. This critic asserts, that Pope's numbers are sweet, but elaborate; and our sense of their energy is in some degree interrupted by an attention to the art displayed in their texture: and that his style may be thought to have less simplicity, less vivacity, and less of the purity of the mother tongue; but that it is at the same time more uniformly elevated, and less debased by vulgarism, than that of his great master.

Pope was not, like Dryden, the servant of a Tonson. But his integrity received a blow from an *honest printer*, after his death. He never was in a hurry to publish, nor, as he describes a distressed poet, to print,

before

*before term ends,**Oblig'd by hunger, and request of friends.*

In the opinion of a good judge, the elegant translator of Pliny and Cicero's Letters, and the author of those of Fitzosborne, from which last performance the following quotation is made, "Mr. Pope seems to have raised our numbers to the highest possible perfection of strength and harmony: and, I fear, all the praise that the best succeeding poets can expect, as to their versification, will be, that they have happily imitated his manner." And in another place he observes, in our poet's commendation, that what has been said of a celebrated French translator may be applied to Mr. Pope, that "it is doubtful, whether the dead or the living are most obliged to him." May it not be affirmed as truly of Pope's poetry, as of Dryden's by Congreve, that, "take his verses, and divest them of their rhimes, disjoint their numbers, transpose their expressions, make what arrangement and disposition you please of his words, yet shall there eternally be poetry, and something which will be found incapable of being

resolved into absolute prose ?” Shenstone praises Young, for bringing thoughts from their lurking-places and most secret recesses. Pope certainly deserves as much applause for comprising and condensing more sense into one line, than ever had been done before. Dean Swift thus happily expresses the faculty of his friend :

“ In Pope I cannot read a line
But with a sigh, I wish it mine ;
When he can in one couplet fix
More sense than I can do in fix.”

Our poetry, which was drawn by the lesser and greater artists to French wire, an allusion of Lord Roscommon, Pope converts into English sterling. His expressions have the merit of Proverbs, and become maxims of morality (I do not say that an ethic system can be drawn from his works, as may be done from Shakspeare's) for every body to get by heart. Though he had so good an ear for poetical harmony, he had no passion for music. Milton knew it scientifically and practically. The organ was a principal amusement after he lost his sight. Pope could not
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have found time to have been great in poetry, painting, and music. Buononcini set his ode and choruses, in the tragedy of Brutus, to music, which were performed at Cannons. He could hardly believe the reality of what people affected to feel from Handel's grand compositions (as great as Orpheus produces in his St. Cecilian Ode), till he consulted Arbuthnot, who assured him of the vast powers of Handel. "I cannot help it, says Pope, according to the Biographia, at Lord Burlington's, where he often saw Handel, but what I hear pleases me no more than the airs of a common ballad!" It is surprising that Pope, who was bred up in the most religious of all religions, if the expression is admissible, should be off his guard, and burlesque the first Psalm; for which Blackmore, of pious and unpoetical memory, reproved him, and got for his pains a *niche* in the Dunciad. He was not in the contempt of Pope, till this unlucky prudery of his unwearied pen. For he desires, in a postscript of a letter to Mr. Hughes, in 1714, his humble service to Sir Richard Blackmore. Some stanzas in one of

his youthful letters border upon immodesty. But gallantry prevents a criticism on the last line of the fourth Canto of the Rape of the Lock.

Pope modernised the prologue to Chaucer's Wife of Bath (and probably the prologue that appears with the name of Betterton) which Dryden says, he durst not adventure, because it was too licentious. Whatever may be in the original text, the translator has pretty well disguised it. The *old Crone*, if not over modest, is not very barefaced. If she can be excused having six husbands, she could not well say less of them. Chaucer, to the present race of readers, is what Ennius was to the Augustan age. He wants to be read with a glossary as much as Rowley's (or Chatterton's) poems, which now employ the conjectural criticism of so many learned writers and will bewilder and mislead so many readers. Though Mr. Tyrwhitt's Chaucer is so much admired, few will study a dead and antiquarian language, for the sake of the prologue or tale of the Wife of Bath, or even the epic story of Palamon and Arcite. The translation in ques-
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tion was fitter for the youth of Pope, than the old age of Dryden. Pope's version was published by Steele, in his *Miscellanies* in 1714. Hughes, the agreeable poet and prose-writer, hearing this prologue was to be inserted, which, as the editor of his life says, was inconsistent with his ideas of decency, withdrew his name and his contribution of pieces. In one of the supplemental volumes to Pope, is a letter addressed to him by a free correspondent, with a double entendre, intentionally introduced, to hold up to him the sort of conversation he always directed to Lady M. W. Montague, which all his friends complained of. His traditional warmth to that Lady, who in a few points resembled Homer's Penelope, and whom Pope possibly might have in his eye, in his version,

(A woman loveliest of the lovely kind,
In body perfect, and compleat in mind)

reminds the reader of a Captain Fish, supporting the character of Mark Anthony, in Dryden's *All for Love*, performed at Blenheim in 1718, to amuse the Duke of Marlborough, and for which Bishop Hoadly wrote a prologue. He acted his part in such a man-

ner, that Sir Richard Steele whispered the Bishop, "My Lord, I doubt this Fish is "Flesh." Pope was prevailed upon to expunge two lines from his *Eloisa* to *Abelard*, that were fitter to have come from the mouth of *Julia* (and breathed more ardour than belongs to Ladies in a cloyster) than from the pen of the wife of *Abelard*.

All reformers should be better than other men. But it often happens, that many a verse and prose man, who has no character of his own to lose, attempts, without the excuse of provocation, to take away that of another.

"The hand that cannot raise a hovel, may be impious enough to demolish a temple," says a living author. This is not meant to be applied to Pope. He had a reputation to lose, and did not imagine, when he made his enemy less, he became bigger himself. He generally put his name to his writings of the satyrical cast; and, as Dr. Brown expresses it in a printed letter to our accomplished Lord of London, "had a name to put."—Pope, at one time, must have been upon the best terms of friendship with Lady Wortley, for he addresses

dresses several complimentary stanzas to her; and he used to be frequently in the company of Lord Hervey. She sends him three very spritely letters from Turkey, and tells him, she is reading the Iliad, with the more satisfaction, because she is on the spot where all the great actions in Homer are performed. "You are the three happiest poets I ever heard of, says this fair correspondent; one (Addison) a Secretary of State: the other (Congreve) enjoying leisure, with dignity, in two lucrative employments: and you—who have drawn the golden current of Pactolus to Twickenham." A memoir of this uncommon Lady would be an agreeable present to the reader. If the writer of this sketch were in possession of materials, he would consider the putting them together a pleasing employment for his pen. There is no doubt of the authenticity of the letters that go by her name, at least no proof of their spuriousness has been adduced. The exactness of the relation is sometimes called in question. Our Ambassador, Sir James Porter, in his *Observations*, takes no notice of her book nor authorities.

thorities. The voluptuous description of the baths at Adrianople could never surely be designed for the public eye. She would deserve censure merely for the discovery, from the delicate part of her sex in England as well as in Turkey, and for telling the truth only, and run the risque of some penance, as the unveilers of the Eleusinian mysteries of old were subject to. It is well known, that Pope and this Lady afterwards quarrelled, and wrote and said the cruellest things of one another they could think of; for friendship with wits of different principles is very subject to mortality. Lady Mary assisted in a satire against him (*Hard as thy heart, and as thy birth obscure*, is one of the bitter lines); and she calls him, what she had done a thousand times before, the wicked wasp of Twickenham, in her entertaining letters from the East. "That man, continues the Lady, has a malignant and ungenerous heart; and he is base enough to assume the mask of a moralist, in order to decry human nature, and to give a decent vent to his hatred of man and woman kind." The benevolent Archbishop Herring, in his
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correspondence with Mr. Duncombe, writes, that if it must be admitted that Pope deserves to go by the name of a wasp, he has a title to that of a bee. Lord Hervey, a man of great accomplishments and resentments, was ardent to engage in the war of satire against Pope, and thought himself a match for him. Bishop Hoadly, his friend, and also the never-to-be-forgotten champion of civil and religious liberty, dissuaded him from contending with a person whose trade was to scold and to bespatter, and applied to him, successfully, a ludicrous night adventure, though not a cleanly one, of Mr. Pate, the learned woolendrapier. Pope does not seem to have wanted courage to have satisfied Lord Hervey by a duel, if that is the meaning of his "being at home, if called upon." Not surely with a sword, with which weapon Pulteney and Hervey had lately contended. It ended, on Pope's side, with his opposing his antagonist with the point of his pen, "Satire's my weapon," says our hero. This was sport to the multitude: but the nobleman called in pride and contempt for his auxiliaries, and
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does not confess himself hurt by his enemy. He stooped, according to the talk of the town, so low, as to relate, that Pope was used to go about to his friends, to beseech them to give him a little sense, in order to support him from day to day, for that he had very little of his own. "So violent did I find parties in London," says Voltaire, in his Letters on the English nation, "that I was assured by several, that the Duke of Marlborough was a coward, and Mr. Pope a fool." Hervey took occasion to ridicule Pope, for his perpetual boast of the number of his friends, and of every trifle relative to himself. It is certain, that no man, except old Montaigne and Sir William Temple, talks so much about himself, through all his writings, in verse, as well as in prose. However tiresome or impertinent it might seem to his enemies, it was grateful to his friends. It was having his story from his own mouth. He does not value himself so much upon his faults and his failings, as the Gascon, and perhaps had not so many of which he would have boasted. But he publishes, in larger than capital letters,

ters, his independence of fortune and spirit, his hatred and contempt of fools, his love of his country, and his esteem of good men. Was the world the better for his satire? If he was not able to make it better, like the pulpit orator against vice, or the animated Burke against corruption and the influence of the crown, he prevented it from becoming worse.

To mend the world's a vast design!

says the author of that original Poem the Spleen. He threatens Hervey, that,

— whilst he breathes, no rich nor noble knave
Shall walk the world in credit to the gave.

At the desire of Queen Caroline, he kept back the long prose letter of Lord Hervey, now inserted in his works, for she became apprehensive it might make her Counsellor, so he is described, “ Now at the ear of “ Eve, familiar toad,” insignificant in the public esteem, and at last in her own.

Lord Chesterfield tells his son, that he never was in company with Addison or Pope, but he rose up a better man, and set a higher value upon himself.—Why did
Pope

Pope deal so much in satire? Let him answer for himself:

Ask you what provocation I have had?

The strong antipathy of good to bad.

Besides, every body loves to hear every body abused, says somebody. As this observation may seem to be tinged with the spirit of Rochefoucault, whose Maxims Warburton truly pronounces to be the entertainment of the idle, the envious, and the worthless part of mankind, it shall be assigned to nobody. He found, as may always be found, if looked for, vice, folly, and villainy, skulking about, or triumphant, in high places, as well as in lower ones, for the pastime and vengeance of his pen. "*Fools rush into my head, and so I write,*" says our satirist. It may be some doubt (I believe Bayle has sentiments of this kind in his Essay on Defamatory Libels) in the eye of morality, whether the purchaser of a satirical libel does not share in the guilt of the author; and whether the pleasure in reading it is not of a criminal sort, and a proof of the malignity of human nature.

ture. There would be no thieves nor stolen goods, experience tells us, if there were no receivers; and no scurrilous writings, nor libellous prints, would be published, to corrupt the ear, or to gratify the impudence of the eye, if there were no purchasers. Atterbury approved so highly of the character of Atticus, for which Addison was made to fit, that he advised Pope to go on, now he had found out which way his genius pointed. But Arbuthnot, with his dying breath, desired him to be less severe, *to reform, and not to chastise*; and, to paraphrase his meaning, to laugh only at folly, and to be content to put vice out of countenance with Horace, rather than to stab like Juvenal. He was preparing for Euthanasia when he wrote this letter. Pope returned him for answer, that he differed with him in opinion in his mode of correcting the world, and that he must go on his own way, for the vice and the man were inseparable. Yet, in the advertisement to his satire, addressed to Arbuthnot, he tells the reader, it was owing to his friend's intreaties, he did not make so free with the names
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of his enemies as they had done with his. There are few fictitious names in Pope; none perhaps that the reader cannot apply to the right owners. It is observed, that in the *Dunciad*, he often only gave the initial letter: but the next edition ventured upon the name at full length. Swift, in his *Verses on his own Death*, pretends he did not deal in personal abuse—*Credat Judæus Apella, non ego*. The ensuing quotation breathes so much humanity, and wants nothing but truth to recommend it, that it is worth the attention of future satirists:

- “ Yet malice never was his aim,
- “ He lash’d the vice, but spar’d the name:
- “ His satire points at no defect,
- “ But what all mortals may correct.”

If Pope’s temper had not led him to personality, the observation of Cleland (whom he describes as a man of sense and of integrity, and, to be very parenthetical, who was the Will Honeycomb of the *Spectator’s* club), in a letter to him, “*that all such writings and discourses as touch no man, will mend no man,*” might have given the bias to his pen. The per-

personalities in his satires multiplied the sale. The portraits of Sporus, Bufo, Clodius, Timon, and Atossa, were purchased by every body. When he made a declaration, respecting the characters in one of his best performances, that no real persons were intended, it checked the reader and the edition. The public would not embrace a cloud for Juno. When he had his enemies in his power, he did not spare them. He received many letters from those who had offended him, containing either protestations of innocence, or imploring pardon. But justice was to be satisfied. If there is not too much pomp in the allusion, may it not be said, that Pope, when he got his enemies at his feet, behaved as the tyrannicides of Kouli Khan, who followed their words up with blows, and, whilst they were dispatching him, cried out, "You have shewn no mercy ; and you shall have no mercy !"

Many of those who affected to be less hurt, carried their concealed wounds to the grave. Even those who wanted to put on a laugh, or, like Cibber, undertook to reply, and re-

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solved to have the last word, generally came off with the worst; and had no reason, in the Warburtonian language, to be "pleased with their situation in the long run." Even the posterity of those he dragged before his tribunal, still read his poetry with some pain, and would expunge the peccant passages. Their punishment and disgrace remain on a record as indelible as on adamant, though their delinquency does not appear. Like the spot of blood on Lady Macbeth, the words cannot be *washed away*. As Sir C. H. Williams, a great wit and a great courtier, was coming down the Thames, with a well-known literary gentleman who lives upon its poetical banks, he pointed to Pope's house, where the Bard was lying in his shroud, and cried out, in the words of Falstaff, "I am afraid of the gunpowder Percy, though he be dead."

The version of Homer, according to our last critic, became, after a little practice, less difficult; and he gives reasons to prove the translator able to do justice to the great original, and defends the mode of his translation. Pope set himself a poetical task, to trans-

translate, on an average, so many lines a day—like the navigator, who reckons his vessel will compleat her voyage at a set time, if she continues to sail at so many knots an hour, unobstructed by storms or calms. Lyttelton (as yet without a title) asked Pope one morning, how he had slept during the night. “I have not had a wink of sleep, says our poet; but I have fared as well, for I have translated forty lines of Homer.” Lyttelton (now ennobled) thinks the translation performed, not so much in the *manner* of Homer, nor agreeable to the *sense*, in all places, as might perhaps be desired.

Mr. Stockdale affirms, “that every impartial judge must allow, that Pope in general excels his original, in propriety, in beauty, and in fire; and, in short, that he improved on Homer; and justly pronounces, that if he had only favoured the world with his translation of the Iliad, it would have ranked him with our great and celebrated poets.” Pope was assisted by the living and the dead. He stood upon the shoulders of his predecessors, and he had literary pioneers

to smoothe the way for him. After all, Bentley pronounced the version to be Spondanus, and not Homer. "Some of those who do not wish me well (I quote from memory) says Pope, in a letter to Addison, when he was translating Homer, assert, that I do not understand Greek; but they have never examined me." It is handed about, that Lord Mansfield, perhaps about the time that our poet pleasantly observed, "How sweet an Ovid "Murray, was our boast!" has said, "that if Mr. Pope was not at first so well acquainted with the language of his original, before he finished his translation he became a thorough master of it." Bentley's opinion (which was rather stolen than given) came round to Pope, and occasioned all the flippancy of his pen, that shews itself so often, against that great critic and hyper-critic. Bentley is reported to have observed on Pope's publication, in this Woolsean egotism, "This man is always abusing *me* or *the king*." Except to the chosen few who can taste the flavour of the Greek dialects, our English Homer is preferable to the original, more read, better

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derstood, and more admired. We are Trojans, and not Greeks. The present observer (he does not mean to be a libeller on the Greek language) approves of the idea of that judge of both languages, the critical and poetical Dr. Beattie, who recommends a literal English translation of the Iliad and Odyssey in prose, to preserve a juster notion of the simplicity of ancient manners. If our great Orientalist could have found leisure to have afforded us only a prose version of the Persian poet Ferdusi, the Homer of his country, it would have been a great acquisition to poetry. We are in hopes that he will give the public (and I hope the public will give him every thing he asks of it) a version of the *volumes, that are suspended in the Mosque at Mecca*, as Imlac calls them in *Rasselas*. A Lowth and a Jones have already exhibited beauties from the poetical treasures of the East, *that vie with Græcian or with Roman fame*.

The reader, who is not all over a Greek and a Roman, will not be displeased with the following extract from the Essay on the Poetry of the Eastern Nations, by the latter

gentleman, at the end of his volume of mellifluous Poems (published in 1772) he calls, *Translations from the Asiatic Languages*. "I must once more request, that, in bestowing these praises on the writings of Asia, I may not be thought to derogate from the merit of the Greek and Latin poems, which have been justly admired in every age; yet I cannot but think that our European poetry has subsisted too long on the perpetual repetition of the same images, and incessant allusions to the same fables; and it has been my endeavour for several years to inculcate this truth, — That if the principal writings of the Asiatics, which are repositied in our public libraries, were printed with the usual advantage of notes and illustrations, and if the languages of the Eastern nations were studied in our places of education, where every other branch of useful knowledge is taught to perfection, a new and ample field would be opened for speculation; we should have a more extensive insight into the history of the human mind; we should be furnished with a new set of images and similitudes, and a number of excellent compositions

positions would be brought to light, which future scholars might explain, and future poets might imitate."

The translator of Fingal has not failed (if he has failed at all) in his version of the Iliad, for want of literature or abilities; for they are equal to any thing. But Ossian and Homer, though both of the profession of *Rhapsodists*, are thought to be very unlike. If the translator has pleased those he wished to please, he has not misemployed his time. May this pen be permitted to apply to him, without *Parnassian sneer*, a line intended for a royal character?

"It is to history he trusts for praise."

Pope, when he had finished the Iliad, and his part of the Odyssey (for, like Atlas, he got Hercules to bear now and then the weight of the poetical burden), did not give up the tuneful trade; for he was certainly *born, for nothing but to write*. He spread the ingot of gold from the mine of Bolingbroke (if there was any gold in the mine of his metaphysics) into such rich poetical leaf, that, when we read the Essay on Man, we think only of

the Poet, and not the purveyor of the philosophy. He fitted the characters of Horace, without the violence of Procrustes, to English follies, and to contemporary knaves. Dr. Beattie says, his imitations equal their archetypes in elegance, and often surpass them in energy and fire.

When Mr. Pope, a few years ago, published his imitations of several of the satires and epistles of Horace (says Mr. Spence in his *Polymetis*) “ I immediately saw a connexion and chain of thinking in them ; which, though I had read over the originals (some of them perhaps an hundred times) I had never regarded or suspected before. I was surprized, in almost each of those pieces, with the new light, and beauties that struck me all at once. I compared the copies with the originals ; and found that Pope and Horace were much the same ; I mean as to the true spirit, the connexions, and their way of thinking. I then began to reflect, how I came not to see that in Horace before, which I now saw so plainly in Mr. Pope’s copies from him : and the only way I could find to account for it was,

was, that I had at first been used to study each of these poems in the original by piecemeal ; that I had been drawn off every other instant from what Horace said, to what he did not say, and very often to what was not at all to his purpose ; that this false and broken impression of Horace's thoughts (taken in at a time when the mind receives impressions most easily, and retains them most firmly) had given me a false idea of his manner of thinking, in general ; and had prevented me from seeing these pieces of his in particular in a right light, till those entire pictures of his thoughts were set before my eyes by a third person ; who, by the way, was himself perhaps the better enabled to conceive Horace so clearly and fully as he has done, by his not having taken his first impressions of that poet in the manner we usually do at schools."

This quotation allures the pen to bestow a few words on Mr. Spence. His Dialogues on the *Odyssëy* recommended him to Mr. Pope, and the amiableness of his disposition continued him in his intimacy to his death. His

name

name is to his will in 1743. He was at this time Professor of History, and had been Professor of Poetry in Oxford, and he had travelled abroad with Lord Middlesex, and brought home with him materials for his *Polymetis*. He was so high in patronage, that it is pretty certain he might have obtained a mitre, if his ambition had prompted him to solicit one. A very late instance, and instances of this sort are very rare, a rejection of lawn sleeves, has displayed itself. A preference of a life of ease, and a love of literature (of which the episcopal *Heliodorus* and *Huetius* afford us instances) generally preserves to us the author, though it obscures the man. "Verse is the product of the mind at ease"—and knowledge of most kinds is the child of leisure, and of abstraction from the world. Spence was content with his income of about nine hundred pounds a year, of which he directed a part to benevolence. In a state of personal debility, he fell into a piece of water in his garden, at Byfleet, where he was drowned. What king Charles said on the death of Cowley (who lost his life by

by continuing under a hedge a whole night in the meadows, near his house at Chertsey, in a deep fog) may be said of Mr. Spence: "He has not left a better man in England behind him." In criticism he took the candid side. He was an Addison, not a Zoilus or a Dennis. Mr. Pope admitted him into such familiarity of communication, that he prepared a large collection of literary anecdotes and remarks from his conversation. A Mr. Milward collected the *Table Talk* of our Selden (who, as Lord Clarendon describes him, had the happiest way of making the most difficult things the most easily understood of any man) and dedicated it to Sir Matthew Hale and the rest of Selden's executors, being enabled to gather it "from the opportunity of hearing his discourse twenty years together." Spence intended these papers for the press, after his death; and conditionally parted with them to his bookseller in Pall-mall. But his executors, armed with a discretionary power, consulted the posthumous honour of the Editor (for possibly the collection was not worthy of the great name
their

their friend bore in the world, whose last work ought not to have been his least) and continue it in manuscript, to be consulted, like the Sibylline papers of old Rome, only upon extraordinary occasions. Christopher Pitt, the translator of Virgil (is it assuming too much to assert, his best translator?) the contemporary of Spence at New College, writes of him in this handsome manner, in 1728, "Mr. Spence is the compleatest scholar, either in solid or polite learning, for his years, that I ever knew. Besides, he is the sweetest tempered gentleman breathing." How much richer in knowledge must he have been (for learning, like money and snow, accumulates very fast) for he lived to 1768?

Pitt, who had published his commended translation of Vida and of the *Æneid*, imitated some of Horace's satires and epistles with great success. In the judgement of many, they were almost equal to Pope's. But it does not appear he thought so highly of them himself. He was cautious of modernizing any he understood Pope was engaged

gaged in. " I should think it sacrilege, he says, to touch upon any, where he has gone before." Pitt, who was enjoying himself in the privacy and snugness of a rectory or two in Dorsetshire, could be no match for Pope, who was as much a spectator, as he pleased, of the vices and follies of a court and a great city, which are to furnish images and characters to the satirist. Nothing is more trite and true, than that no one can describe the manners he never saw. To draw *to* the life, the pen must draw *from* the life. Pitt was upon terms of friendship with Pope (who had praised his translation of Virgil, as he did Merrick's of Tryphiodorus) and transmitted to him his manuscript translation of some of the books of the *Odyssy*, of which he made as much use as he thought proper. Some lines extracted from a meagre volume of Pitt's poems, I am afraid, were put into the *Bathos*. Such a ridicule (but who can like it?) might make him take more pains, and write better verses in future.

Dr. Donne (for I hope we are getting into the road again) does not afford Mr. Pope such

oppor-

opportunity of entertaining satire as Horace. The copy certainly pleases us more than the original. Dryden says, that Donne was the greatest wit in the nation. He calls him, and perhaps christened him, the *metaphysical* poet. Almost all his poems were written when he was very young. It is a task to read and to understand an hundred lines of his satires. "A poet, says some lively writer, ought to *run* like Ovid, or *walk* like Virgil, but never to stand *stock still* like Donne." His intention was to write satire in a loose familiar verse; but unfortunately, it is measure, without measure; like Lucilius or Horace, and not like Juvenal. Bishop Hall's satires, called *Virgidemarium*, which it seems did not fall in the way of Pope soon enough, are more luminous and more musical to the ear. The poetical satirist should not oblige his reader, as Barten Holyday says of Juvenal and Persius, to choose a meaning or to find one. The satires of the "divine" Ariosto, viewed even through the thickness of an English atmosphere, are more interesting to the reader. The *Hilliad* of poet Smart was not without
its

its patrons. Fielding, either through conviction or revenge, said of it, in a letter to the author, that it was as witty as the hero of it was worthless. Two lines from thence, because they are pronounced by a powerful critic to be satirical, poetical, and philosophical; and which, if they had been written by Pope, would have been much admired, should have a place here, though they fix a ridicule on the hero who became at last a Knight of the Polar Star.

... *Hiatus valde defendus!*

Th' insolvent tenant of incumber'd space."

Pope was content to be an imitator, when he ceased being a translator. He never scrupled to borrow (but sure he seldom borrowed from necessity, as Warburton once gave it under his hand—*litera scripta manet*), knowing he was so well able to repay. No one can charge him with robbing and murdering at the same time. Ill-nature may trace his parodies and allusions through fifty authors. My friend Thompson (called from a particular composition *Sickness Thompson*) had the patience to read Hammond's *Elegies*, with

Tibullus in his hand, and declared, there was hardly any thing in Hammond, which had not pre-existence in Tibullus—*Nil dictum, quod non dictum prius*. He interleaved Pope's works, as he said, to observe how much originality there was in them. He was an excellent classic scholar, and, next to the Wartons, I imagine, the greatest master of the English poets, both old and new. The admirers of Pope would not thank any body for detecting his *petty larcenies of wit*, or proving too much against him. Thompson is gone; and, to say nothing of his writings, his common-place book probably followed him.

A writer started up some years ago, who represented Ben Jonson and Pope as plunderers of Parnassus :

“Thieves of renown, and pilferers of fame.”

A defender of Pope immediately appeared, who gave it as his opinion, that Pope adorned every sentiment he adopted with a peculiar grace and dignity. In the following remarkable passage he seems to have imitated Silius Italicus, says the vindicator :

“Self-

" Self-love but serves the virtuous mind to wake;
 As the small pebble stirs the peaceful lake:
 The centre mov'd, a circle strait succeeds;
 Another still and still another spreads:
 Friend, parent, neighbour, first it will embrace;
 His country next; and next all human race;
 Wide and more wide, th'overflowings of the mind
 Take every creature in, of every kind;
 Earth smiles around, with boundless beauty blest;
 And heaven beholds it's image in it's breast."

Essay on Man, Ep. IV. 363.

Silius Italicus has introduced this simile upon a different occasion.

" Signa reportandi crescebat in agmine fervor.
 Sic ubi perrumpit stagnantem calculus undam,
 Exiguos format per prima volumina gyros;
 Mox tremulum vibrans motu gliscente liquorem
 Multiplicat crebros sinuati gurgitis orbes;
 Donec postremò laxatis circulus oris,
 Contingât geminas patulo curvamine ripas."

Lib. XIII. 23.

Pope had borrowed this simile once before, in his Temple of Fame. He confesses, " that he had served himself all he could by reading," which must be admitted as an apology

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for

for all his imitations. Neither the friends nor enemies of Pope seem to have discovered his making free with this Latin poet. "Supposing Mr. Pope, says his admirer (Mr. Robertson) took his idea from these exquisite lines, yet every reader of taste will acknowledge himself obliged to him for the ingenuity of the application, the management of the allusion, and the harmony of the versification. His enemies can only say, he found the gem in Italy: it may be added, he brought it into England, and, by setting it anew, gave it additional lustre." From what source did our great dramatist derive the following similitude, in the First Part of Henry VI? Was it from the Roman classic, or from the volume of nature that was always open before him?

"Glory is like a circle in the water,
Which never ceases to enlarge itself,
Till by broad spreading it disperse to nought."

While the pen of recollection is in hand, let it be observed, that it was boasted of Leonidas, that it was all the property of Mr. Glover, and that he had not borrowed or
stolen

stolen any simile, or comparison, or allusion. The author is our poetical Nestor, and wrote his epic when he was only twenty-four years of age. A polite writer, lately mentioned, allows his similes to be generally drawn from the grandest objects in nature, which is pretty much, says he, in Milton's manner. To know more of Leonidas, the reader is recommended to the perusal of Dr. Pemberton's *Observations on Poetry*; and, if he abounds in leisure, to examine into these pretensions and this imputed merit.

Pope is often beholden to Boileau, whose genius was formed upon the ancients, and was as chaste as his own. I think there can be no proof that he could not relish as well as read Boileau in French. And yet Voltaire has these words, "Pope, whom I was intimately acquainted with, could hardly read French; spoke not one syllable of our language, not being capable of doing it." What must the reader think of the letter to Racine? Voltaire has commended the poetry of Pope so warmly, in several parts of his works, that perhaps he no where means to

traduce him, nor misrepresent him. Of Voltaire's opinion of some of Pope's poetry, take it in his own English words, from a letter of his in Warburton's edition. "For my part, I look upon his poem called the Essay on Criticism, as superior to the Art of Poetry of Horace; and his Rape of the Lock is, in my opinion, above the Lutrín of Despreaux. I never saw so amiable an imagination, so gentle graces, so great variety, so much wit, and so refined knowledge of the world, as is in this little performance." Voltaire translated, in his Letters on the English Nation, a small part of the Rape of the Lock: so he did of Hudibras. He writes to Mr. Pope a spritely letter in English, on his accident in 1726, from Lord Bolingbroke's at Dawley. This great Genius was two years in England, during which time he finished, printed, and presented his Henriade to Queen Caroline. He composed an account of the Epic Poets in our language; wrote a short poem in English; attended our theatres; but oh! never to be forgiven nor forgot, by the bigots! to his dying day, with his tongue and his pen he misrepresented Shakspeare!

No man ever had so many enemies as Pope, nor was so well able to defend himself against them. "I wish, says Balzac, quoted in the Spectator, I could pile up a mountain of the stones that envy has flung at me." What the Dunces wrote against him he collected; and, if I am not misinformed, they were intended to have been preserved in bundles in the Museum. Whether they are to be found, or why they are not there, let the curious in such researches examine.

Here let us make a momentary pause, to ask, if dullness alone, unless superadded to malignity, is a sufficient cause of abhorrence and separation from the rest of the human species? Charles the Fifth desires Erasmus, in Fontenelle's Dialogues, to enquire, "what hindered him from being a stupified blockhead?" "It was nothing almost, says Charles; a small disposition of the fibres, or some slender matter which escapes the search of the most exact anatomy." Neither Pope nor Swift seem to have any compunction for the use or abuse of their wit, excepting their harmless raillery on Vanbrugh

and Addison. Yet Swift can say of himself,

True, genuine dullness mov'd his pity,

Unless it offer'd to be witty.

Swift pointed to an old oak, as he was walking with Dr. Young, and foretold, that he himself should begin to decay at top. If he had become one of his miserable Strulbrugs soon after he wrote their history, his antagonists would have converted it into a judicial punishment.

The bathos, or the art of sinking in poetry, was the forerunner of the Dunciad, Pope, by his wanton conduct in that piece, provoked half the scribblers of the town, who pelted him from Grubstreet with their scurrilities from year to year, till he could either bear it no longer, or found he had collected raw materials enough to manufacture into a mock heroic poem. It was presented to the King in 1721. But it is probable, it could hardly be understood or admired by the Sovereign, who is known not to have loved poetry. On hearing the highest praises on *Paradise Lost*, he asked with quickness, "Why did not Milton write in prose?"

Cibber

Cibber tells Pope, it was a fine composition, but an indecent triumph over a parcel of poor creatures, that he ought to have been ashamed to contend with. Pope thought he had a right to revenge, and that he was doing a piece of service in setting a mark upon his enemies; for he says in one of his satires, he always found, *That each ill author is as bad a friend.*

The hint of the Dunciad is from Dryden's Mac Fleckno. It ruined authors with their booksellers, for nobody would buy what they wrote; and it kept the press in some awe, which is more than the laws can do at present. Pope offends in this poem against his own maxim, that,

No pardon obscenity should find —
and particularly against that of Lord Roscommon, that

Want of decency is want of sense.

Dr. Delany confesses, that his Dunciad degenerates to the lowest and most indelicate imagery and filth. He says, that a friend asked Pope, to whom he shewed the poem in manuscript, if he thought there was not something in the poem, that might give offence

to persons that loved and honoured him, or lessen him in their esteem? To which Pope answered, *I cannot tell but there may.* Do you think that any of the passages I object to, will raise you in the esteem of any man living, whose esteem you honour? *I cannot say there is,* replied the poet.—And yet Pope paid no regard to this remonstrance, but defiled the pages of his satire, with *stercoraceous language*, which perhaps he learned from his friend Swift. Shall this pen extenuate this offence in the words of Martial at confession, (with a softening of the first epithet)

Lasctiva est nobis pagina, vita proba,

Cleland and Savage were called upon (by dedications and prefaces) to appear for Pope, when he did not care to record his own appearance, and served in the double capacity of friends and of spies. Savage collected together all the anecdotes of the heroes of the *Dunciad*, that make them ridiculous in the notes. His high birth, his distresses, and his merit, made Pope his benefactor for life; and he contributed an annuity of twenty pounds a-year towards his support; but Savage irrecoverably lost the good opinion of

of Pope by his unconquerable arrogance, and he had the art of chilling the liberality of his warmest patrons. His behaviour became so offensive to our poet, and so injurious to his spirits (for Hawkesworth told me it prayed upon his health) that he was heartily glad when he withdrew from London. He might have said, when he parted with Savage, who had promised to take up his residence at Swansea, in Wales, as Lewis the XIVth did to king James, when he assisted him with a fleet and army for Ireland, "The best wish I can bestow is, that I may not see your face again." Two lines from the *Vanity of Human Wishes* strike so forcibly upon my mind, that I must appropriate them, as descriptive of this unhappy man, the natural son of Earl Rivers,

"There mark what ills the scholar's life assail;
Toil, envy, want, the garret, and the jail!"

Savage would have been forgot (for characters of ingratitude are not worth a memorial), if his friend, almost the only person he had not alienated himself from, and who (as Archbishop Laud says of himself) "never de-
ferts,

serts, till he is first forsaken," had not embalmed his memory in a masterpiece of Biography.

Aaron Hill, who had been secretary to Lord Paget at Constantinople while he mediated the peace at Carlowitz, somehow got a place in the Dunciad, but was delivered out of such bad company with a compliment, by the satirist himself. Whether he was made as clean by the poetical white-wash of the Thames, as he was before his dirty immersion, may admit of as much doubt, as whether the character that has been stained by a rumour can be made afterwards as white as ermine. Hill had a spirit and a pen to obtain satisfaction for this intended disgrace. It occasioned a series of letters between them; and expostulation, like a quarrel between lovers, ended in a reconciliation. What he writes of Pope is characteristical of him, and shews Mr. Hill capable of being a formidable poetic enemy. Perhaps this quotation has more merit than all that was written against him. It is hoped the reader, though a friend to Pope, as well as the Essayist, will not dis-

disapprove the insertion : for Pope thought it the judgement to make a friend of him.

“ Tuneful Alexis, on the Thame’s fair side
The Ladies plaything, and the Muse’s pride,
With merit popular, with wit polite,
Easy tho’ vain, and elegant tho’ light,
Desiring and deserving others praise,
Poorly *accepts* a fame he ne’er repays,
Unborn to cherish, *sneakingly* approves,
And wants the soul to spread the worth he loves.”

Si sic omnia! the Pegasus of Mr. Hill was apt to run away with his rider. He wanted a bridle, and was often in danger of being thrown from his back. He was such a poet as Statius, and may remind the reader of his situation on a precipice, to the trepidation of the spectators, in the poetical masquerade of Strada. Though his works are not without happy sentiments and expressions of the tender and elevated sort, they are accused of furnishing more examples of the false sublime (for in the low nonsense, according to Addison’s description of it, he seldom deals) than perhaps any poet who has so conspicuous a place on the English Parnassus.

A new

A new glaring meteor now began to shoot up its head above the literary horizon. The name of this giant was Warburton. The appellation of Colossus is not to be given any longer, it having made ill blood between Dr. Brown and our late eminent Oxford Professor. This extraordinary man rose, from being a practising attorney at Newark, where his father was townclerk, to be Lord Bishop of Gloucester. Before he shook off the lay-habit, he surveyed all the arguments for and against Revelation, with great labour and impartiality, and wrote afterwards with sovereign contempt of free-thinkers and their cause. And yet, at one time, by the orthodox he was reckoned heterodox. He offered to enlist himself into the service of Pope, and was taken at his word. He introduced himself at Twickenham, with a vindication of the Essay on Man in his hand, which poem was known all over Europe by French translations. His attempt was, to defend the system, and confute Croufaz, a professor in Switzerland. Croufaz, it was said, made it tremble to its centre; but this defender of Pope's

Pope's ethical faith endeavoured to prop it up. Dr. Middleton desires Warburton to advise Pope to be content with his explanation, and defend it with the arguments he has found out. The more this metaphysical poem was surveyed, till the new commentator appeared, the more unsolid was its foundation thought to be. "It is more easy, says Mr. Wyndham, in his Tour through Wales, to destroy an hypothesis, than to support one." If Warburton had not come at the right hour, the system would never have been half so well understood. It could not have resisted the shock of time, and the fashion of new opinions. This champion preserved Pope from the sentence of condemnation. Dr. Trapp, a cold poet, but a warm and respectable critic, somewhere asserts, that, "Pope's discoveries in the moral world entitle him to as much applause, as Newton's in the physical one." If this observation is not to be found in his works (but I think I read it whilst at the university), let it be considered as a slip of memory, but not a perjury of the pen. Warburton became master of the spirit of
Pope,

Pope, and the director of his opinions, as long as he lived. He trusted him with writing notes on his works, of which he gave him the profits and the custody of his fame. It became the wish of both, that they might go down hand in hand to posterity. What is a little singular, Warburton, amongst his earliest friends, who were Pope's enemies, had roughly and roundly asserted, that the Essay was collected "from the worst passages of the worst authors." This was either unknown to Pope, or forgot or forgiven. He who says a great deal, has always something to unsay. The younger Richardson asserts, "that Pope never dreamt of the scheme he afterward adopted," and that he was afraid of the imputation of fatalism and deism.

Denina (in his *Revolutions of Literature*) says, that no poet ever treated so profound a subject with so much sublimity—but, that it is nothing more than a versification of the system of Leibnitz, as Lucretius's poem is that of Epicurus.

The Optimist in Voltaire is a banter on Pope's, or rather Leibnitz's position, "What-
" ever

“ever is, is right.” This (relative to Pope) Richardson says, is of his own knowledge, and that he was privy to this Essay, from the first scratches, to the last laboured manuscript in printed characters, which Pope gave him, on account of his trouble, in collation. But, the Commentary made the Poem considered as pious and philosophical. Poetical, at least enough so, it had been generally allowed. Had the great Warburton changed his opinion, or was it altered by interest? No matter; perhaps he was right at last. But surely friendship may corrupt the head, as certainly as money corrupt the heart.

The Bishop of Carlisle, in a preface to his late new edition of his translation of King's *Origin of Evil* (in opposition to Dr. Warburton, who, while on a visit at Cambridge, was ready to quarrel on the subject) asserts, that Bolingbroke extracted the scheme of *the best*, from the book of the Archbishop (whose manuscript diary of his own life is said to be extant) and that Lord Bathurst told him, he had seen these collected notions in the hand-writing of that Lord, lying by the side
VI of

of Pope, when he was writing the Essay on Man.

Of the Essay on Criticism, which, Warton says, he has reason to believe, was first written in prose (according to a precept of Vida to his pupil), Pope's friend Richardson pronounces, that Pope always spoke of it as an irregular collection of thoughts, thrown together, as they offered themselves, as Horace's Art of Poetry was, and written in imitation of that irregularity, which he even admired, and said was beautiful. But Warburton, a Columbus in criticism, taught Pope a better lesson :

For learned commentators view,

In Homer, more than Homer knew.

In answer to a question proposed more than twenty years ago, in the Essay on the Life and Writings of Pope, What is there transcendently pathetic or sublime in Pope? Mr. Stockdale, an admirer of our Poet, only on this fide idolatry, thus replies : " Many passages throughout his works ; his filial apostrophe to the age and infirmities of an affectionate mother—his Elegy to the Memo-

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ry of an unfortunate Lady—his Prologue to Cato—his Eloisa to Abelard (which, Beattie says, is beyond all comparison more sublime and more interesting than any of Ovid's Letter-writing Ladies) are all transcendently *pathetic*; and asserts, that a summer's-day would elapse before we could read all that is transcendently *sublime* in Pope." "It may indeed be acknowledged (says Dr. Hawkesworth) that Pope has displayed his power to excell in the sublime and pathetic, only occasionally; but, it might as well be objected to Milo's strength, that he carried an ox but once, as to Pope's excellence in the pathetic and sublime, that he did not always display it." If Dr. Warton could have foreseen that he should have been called to such severe account, he would perhaps have couched his question in terms more guarded. It must be confessed, though the two editions of his book found purchasers, yet he brought over but few of his readers to his opinion. But no reviewer of the subject became so personal as this champion; though Ruffhead is not inclined to shew him much mercy.

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Another

Another volume of the Essay is eagerly expected in the course of this literary season, notwithstanding the impetuosity of the last piece of criticism.

Pope refused a degree of Doctor of Laws, from the university of Oxford, during a visit there, because they would not confer the same honour on his *new* favourite, who, it must be confessed, was to them a *new man*.

Pope had such a melody of voice, that, according to Lord Orrery, honest Tom Southern christened him, "the little nightingale." I was told the other day, he was called, for the time, "Wycherley's Crutch;" alluding either to the different sizes of their persons, or the support that Pope was giving to an edition of the other's poems. A friend, since dead, had an opportunity of passing much time at the late Lord Radnor's at Twickenham about the year 1740, where Pope, who was his neighbour, often visited, because he could have his own way, sick or well, and where every thing was made convenient to him: where nobody was admitted whom he did not love, or who did not love him,

him, to use part of an epistolary invitation of Pulteney to the Dean of St. Patrick. He used to say, that Pope's conversation was of the most agreeable kind, and that, in his judgement, it was impossible to change one word for the better, in the course of the longest conference. His table-talk became a banquet for the next day, as Plutarch records of some eminent person. Pope says of himself, that he was able to express his thoughts, very collectedly, at table with three or four friends; but that he was disconcerted in a large mixed company. A delicate man fancies, that he is surrounded by a thousand spies, and that his thoughts are anticipated before his words are heard. Doors have eyes, and walls have ears. But this orator, for such he was, if true eloquence consists, not in elocution, but in saying what is proper on the occasion, displayed himself to more advantage in the closet than in the senate. He made but a poor appearance at the bar of the House of Lords; he was afraid of saying too much or too little, and thought (like Addison in the House of Commons)

he had more to lose, than to get there. He owns, that he had but ten words to utter, and he made two blunders in them. Pope had been summoned by Atterbury to give some account how he passed his time at Bromley, who hoped his poetical friend would describe him as more occupied in poetry than treason. Pope, who was by no means a lute in the house, became a trumpet out of it. He appealed, like a tribune, to the people, for him. He plucked up courage when it was too late, thus publickly to acknowledge his intimacy with the prelate,

“How pleasing Atterbury’s softer hour!

“How shone the soul unconquer’d in the Tower!
and, in another place, he alludes to the injustice of his banishment.

There are not many ardent expressions, traditionary or otherwise, and what are called *bon mots*, of Mr. Pope. (If the remark is not impertinent in this place, I recollect that Cowley asserts, “that Cromwell did not leave behind him the memory of one wise or witty apophthegm, even amongst his domestic

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tic servants or greatest flatterers.") Our poet chose perhaps rather to write on marble, than to trust to the evanescence of memory, and, to use the phrase and advice of Mr. Foote, the late great master and actor, in the low comedy, *to bottle up his wit*. The last critic and biographer of our poet (who writes for his readers, in the compliment of the impartial Dr. Kippis, with the reflections and observations of a Plutarch and a Tacitus) collects but a single repartee. A second shall be exhibited from Ruffhead, in the virtuoso language, *in good preservation*. The late prince of Wales honoured Pope with a visit at Twickenham, who, on his expressing the most dutiful professions of attachment, gave his Royal Highness an opportunity of observing, very shrewdly, that, *his love to princes was inconsistent with his dislike of kings, since princes may in time be kings*. "Sir, replies Pope, I consider royalty, under that noble and authorized type of a Lion. Whilst he is young, and before his nails are grown, he may be approached and carested with safety and pleasure." Pope was as excellent in prose

as in verse. By habit, he says, it became as easy to express his thoughts in one mode, as the other. The reports of the *Improvisatori* poets would be incredible, if observation had not verified them. A few seasons ago, there was an Italian Rhapsodist in London; who, as I am told, made excellent extempore verses on every subject that was proposed to him. Art and Nature can do wonders together. The style of Pope's essays and letters is the properest in the world. The Essay on Shakspeare is so perfect (*that* on Homer is not less so) that our classical editor of that dramatic writer confessed to his friends, that "his preface stood in his way, and made him loth to put pen to paper." Pope, like Dryden, never let his prose break in upon his verse, nor his verse upon his prose. He laid down plans for more publications, if Death, who confounds the projects of poets and politicians, had not defeated them. The outlines of the heroic poem of Brutus have been seen in the hand-writing of Lord Lyttelton. Upon what grounds this is asserted is now forgot, for the informant is no more. It was said, that

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it was presented to Dr. Brown, who afterwards became better known as the *Estimator* of the manners and principles of the times, with the supposition that he would take the epic pen, and erect it into a poem. But he was not a man to pace in another's trammels. As Pope has been called, with Boileau, the Poet of reason, there is no doubt he would have fraught his poem of Brutus with wisdom, and embellished it with all the charms of expression, even though fancy might not be confessed to predominate. Why should not the epigrammatic couplet he uttered upon Thompson the physician, whom he discharged, then in every body's mouth, be admitted to be his, and inserted accordingly :

“Dunces, adieu ! forgive offences past !

Thompson the dunce has kill'd your foe at last.”

Notwithstanding the opinion of Voltaire has been adduced on the merit of some of Mr. Pope's compositions, the reader who has not opened many volumes will not be displeased to know the sentiments of Dr. Beattie and Bishop Berkley. If this be thought in some measure to be writing one book from another,

the trouble belongs to the transcriber more than to the peruser, to whom it affords more variety of entertainment. On these topics, authorities may please better than arguments. "In the Rape of the Lock, says Beattie, Pope outshines Boileau as much as the Sylphs that flutter round Belinda exceed in spriteliness and luminous beauty those mechanical attendants of the goddess of Luxury, who knead up plumpness for the chin, and pound vermilion for the cheek of the monk." Lord Kaims thinks this poem the most perfect in the English language. Dean Berkley writes in early days, in these words, from Leghorn, to Mr. Pope: "I have accidentally met with your Rape of the Lock here, having never seen it before. Style, painting, judgement, spirit, I have already admired in other of your writings: but, in this, I am charmed with the magic of your invention (the only faculty of Pope in dispute with the critics) with all those images, allusions, and inexplicable beauties you raise so surprizingly, and at the same time so naturally, out of a trifle." Before the insertion of the machinery (which was

was added a year after) Addison pronounced it to be (in the words of Lucretius) *merum sal*. The Sylphs and the Gnomes were as much the talk of the town (I may add, they were the Deities of the day) as the monsters in Gulliver's Travels, "so vastly little and so vastly big," as a certain class of readers denominate them. A Sylph is a more useful and benevolent being than even Swift's favourite Houyhnhnms. As I perhaps shall never have another opportunity of mentioning the name of Berkley, who is praised by Pope for *every virtue under heaven*, I crave the reader's indulgence for a moment. Every body knows Berkley was a philosopher, a traveller, and a bishop. But it is on account of his being a poet and a prophet, that his name is made use of here. He was the author of a single poem, that stands, like a column, by itself, and wants no support (in six stanzas) which contain some of his good sense, in verses not very excellent. They were written at Rhode Island, in America, about the year 1726, where he arrived, having missed Bermudas, in the Atlantic Ocean, whither

whither he intended his romantic voyage. The last stanza contains something very *prophetic*, and is making too rapid haste to be fulfilled. As an Englishman, the pen trembles in my hand whilst I am giving it to my less informed readers :

“ Westward the course of empire takes its way ;
The four first acts already past,
A fifth shall close the drama of the day :
Time’s noblest offspring is the last.”

“ As to the future grandeur of America, and its being a rising empire, under one head, whether republican or monarchical, it is one of the idlest, and most visionary notions, that ever was conceived even by writers of Romance,” says the intrepid and disinterested Dean of Gloucester, in his late printed letters to Mr. Necker. Such a positive opinion (though it is setting prophet against prophet) in favour of the old world against the new, and of Old England against her Colonies, may give a prospect of hope to the nation, a part of which is in tears, and the other in rage, on account of her situation. But let us change the scene from America to Twickenham.

ham.—All Pope's poetry is not equally correct and interesting. His collection of epigrams, perhaps the meanest of his performances, has fared but indifferently, from the late severity of criticism. But two of the lines on Craggs are so much to the honour of a Secretary of State and of the particular statesman, that it is a pleasure to introduce them here :

Who broke no promise, serv'd no private end,
Who gain'd no title, and who lost no friend.]

It is difficult to be a good man and a great public character. Old Whiston says, in his own Biography, that Lord Stanhope confessed to him, that "it was impossible for a minister of state to be an honest man." Surely, he gave himself a bad character : or perhaps he was not in earnest. He lived with the reputation of a disinterested and uncorrupt minister ; and when he died, his sovereign retired to shed tears for his loss. Let us recollect the ending of a line in Pope, which points—"to Stanhope's noble flame :"
and then turn from Rysback's sepulchral figure of him, in Westminster Abbey, to Craggs's
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monument, and advert to the couplet just quoted.

There are, there certainly were, in the first editions, a great number of feeble lines, and of indifferent rhymes (hardly ever the case with Swift), and now and then an ungrammaticism; for the English Grammar of Dr. Lowth exhibits several. They who are at the trouble of separating the chaff from the wheat, may have the first for their pains. Walfsh, called by Dryden the best critic in the nation, gave him advice, early in his poetical life, to aim at correctness, for that was still wanting and reserved for him: but he could not always reach it;

“For who expects a faultless piece to see,
Thinks what ne’er was, nor is, nor e’er can be,”
says the Essay on Criticism. He who made or found so many *nonsense* verses for the Bathos, was the author of some lines that deserved a place in that repository. The couplet alluded to is not to be found in any present copy of his works; but perhaps are in the first edition of Byssé’s Art of Poetry, under the article *Stag-hunting*, or else in the Moon of Ariosto.

Ariosto. Now the poet is dead, he is to be tried by his best performances.

But Pope never creeps for a hundred lines together, as Dryden meanly asserts of Milton. His Pegasus, now and then, seems to want a spur more than a bridle. I have seen it lately in print, that there have been several who have versified as well as Pope. If this is to be taken for granted, Mr. Hayley must be admitted of that small number. His last poem of the Triumphs of Temper, amongst its many happy incidents, contains an enlargement of Pope's Cave of Spleen, and is full of energy and excellent poetry. He has augmented the number of rhymes, the paucity of which, in all Mr. Pope's poetry, is astonishing.

But language is only the dress of thought, and one is as inferior to the other, as the body is to the mind. Perhaps even an admirer of Pope may acknowledge, he was as much the poet of art as of nature: Both had claims upon him, and he upon both. Tragedy and Comedy struggle hard for their favourite Garrick, in the well-known picture of Sir Joshua Reynolds (who is a master of the pen as well

as

as the pencil) ; for, who had the greatest right to him, remains undetermined. Pope certainly shines by a borrowed, as well as by a native light. The diamond is indebted for its lustre to the hand of the jeweller, though it owes its parentage and growth to the mine and to the sun. "His faults, says the amiable Spence, are the faults of a man, but his beauties are the beauties of an angel."

His Essay on Criticism did not sell till he put his name to it (a practice recommended by the trade, at this time, to the sale of all slender publications) as his catholic bookseller in Russel Street informed one of the best scholars of the age. His works sustained much alteration and variation, both of insertion and deletion, and the change is always for the better. His manuscript of the Essay on Man, which was purchased by Dr. Chauncey, a great and expensive collector of curiosities, written, as has been hinted, in printed characters, which he affected from his first ardour of imitation, shews the improvement and burnish he chose to bestow upon it. I had forgot to observe, that Pope thought him-

himself obliged to defend his Essay, in a letter to Racine, in 1742, against a charge of some pernicious notion to be found there.

“ His notions, he asserts, are diametrically opposite to the sentiments of Spinoza and Leibnitz, and perfectly coincident with the tenets of Pascal and Fenelon.”

It was expected that Warburton would have written his life, for he promised it; and that his executors would have published some of his posthumous pieces. The sweepings of the study of a great Genius ought to be thrown into the grave with him. In both those hopes the eager met with a disappointment. What could give rise to the expectation of finding a satirical life of Dean Swift, in manuscript, by Pope, is not yet perhaps too late to enquire into, for two of his noble executors are still living. The last letters that pass between our Poet and the Dean express the most serious and solemn veneration for each other. It was not easy for honest biography to shew itself, when Pope's ashes were hardly cold. And yet, a Mr. Ayre scrupled not to write an account of him immediately, in two octavo volumes.

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Warburton was entangled by late friendships, *et recentibus odiis*. His prospect of elevation in the church, where he was afterward recompensed with a mitre by the interest of Lord Chatham, made him every day too great for his subject. He did nothing on this occasion; but thirty years afterwards he assisted Ruffhead with some biographical materials, and revised the life, as written by his locum-tenens, sheet by sheet. Every great man, and some to swell their own importance, sought the acquaintance and friendship of our poet. England had reason to value herself upon having so great a bard. Foreigners and strangers made all possible enquiries after him. Every body would have gone to Twickenham, "to stop the chariot, and to board the barge," in order to visit him. A countryman went to Rome on purpose to get a sight of Livy. But our modest son of the Muses was, at no time of his life,

"Smit with the mighty pleasure to be seen."

Statesmen of every denomination, especially since the Hanover Accession, offered to provide
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for him, and to enable him to enjoy the accommodation of a carriage; for a chariot was as necessary for him as for Eriethonius. But he found he could live without their help, and he felt the importance of being his own master. He was intimate, says the Chevalier Ramsay (writing to France in defence of Pope's character) with several successive ministers, and often with many at the same time. Thus circumstanced, it would have been easy for him to create a large fortune, had he availed himself of the disgrace of one party, in order to recommend himself to the other. He was determined to live and die, (imitate him who can !)

"Unplaced, unpenfioned, no man's heir or slave."

Swift judiciously praises Pope for this spirit, in the following couplet,

"None loves his king or country better,
Yet none was ever less their debtor."

His income, in the last flourishing years of his life, amounted to about eight hundred pounds a year; a part of which he appropriated to charity. *Res parva labore, non relicta.* For his father, a zealous papist and Jacobite,

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would not assist or trust the new government, at the Revolution in eighty-eight; but locked up his money in his chest, like Don Barnard de Castel Blazo, in *Gil Blas*, and lived upon the principal, which was almost exhausted by the time he left Binfield, and arrived with his son at Twickenham, where he died two years after. Before the nation was overwhelmed with taxes, and before life was made so expensive as it is at present, it was sufficient for the moderate purposes of a temperate Bard. "His manners, says Lord Orrery, were delicate, easy, and engaging; and he treated his friends with a politeness that charmed, and a generosity that was much to his honour. Every guest was made happy within his doors. Pleasure dwelt under his roof, and elegance presided at his table."

Pope, as well as his friend Swift, was a Whig in state: for he explodes

"Th' enormous faith of many made for one."

He was undoubtedly no stranger to the language of *master* Hooker, that, "to live by one man's will, becomes all mens misery;"

nor

nor to this difference, which Aristotle, as quoted by his commentator Warburton, places between a king and a tyrant, "that the *first* supposes himself made for the people; the *other*, that the people are made for him;" notions, not preached in the courts of Alexander or of the family of Tudor! He was as hearty against despotism (at this democratic season, surely, according to one of the earliest phrases of Warburton, the *mormo* of an affrighted imagination) as against corruption.

"In moderation placing all my glory,

While Tories call me Whig, and Whigs a Tory."

But, when the law of Solon, that obliges all men at last to take a decided part, seemed requisite to be put into execution, he continued no longer silent. He thought he was called upon to draw his pen in the service of liberty,

"Free as young Lyttelton, her cause pursue,"

by cooperating with the opposition, that consisted of Whigs and Tories, against Sir Robert Walpole, who was deserted at last by his friends, and preserved by his sovereign. Pope's principles, as delineated in his poems,

are almost republican. Perhaps like Dr. King our Oxford Cicero, he came over to the side of the people at last, thus characterised in a certain ode, *thrice sacred multitude!*

Notwithstanding the applause in the theatre (excuse, reader, this short ramble!) on the *cum venerit ipse, canemus*; the Doctor told a high-church friend, that, when they found *the young man was not to be trusted*, he forsook the party, for which, through more than half a century, he had pleaded with his pen, his purse, and his person, and became a republican. In what sense of the word? Probably, in that of Sir Thomas Smith, of Locke, and of Sydney. He went up with the University address (*credite posteri!*) on the accession of his present Majesty: and thus gave up a *jure divino*, for an act-of-parliament chief magistrate. If Pope had been living, and one whom “*Isis or Cam made Doctor of her Laws,*” he might have been persuaded to have done the like. Pope never was molested on account of the form of that religion in which he was born, bred, and died. Every man lives and dies his own way in this
land

land of liberty. Two pious and not unpoetical lines fastened on my memory very early ; and shew the resignation of their author to his Creator :

“ Safe in the hands of God’s disposing pow’r,
Or in the natal or the mortal hour.”

An intelligent reader of these sheets gave it me as his opinion, that he had no doubt Pope was so sensible a man (and there is a cant expression, “that all men of sense are of the same religion,”) that, if he had lived in the times of old Rome, he would, in conformity to the religion of the state, have sacrificed a cock to Æsculapius. Religion, with Voltaire, is a matter of Geography. The Author of the Spleen seems to be very easy on this point ; for he says,

“ But, to avoid religious jars,
The laws are my expositors,
Which in my doubting mind create
Conformity to church and state.
I go, pursuant to my plan,
To Mecca, with the caravan.”

Death does not seem to have taken Pope by surprize. When it came upon him, and he thought he was dying “of a hundred good symptoms,” he only perceived that he was deprived of the power of thinking. If I am not mistaken, he had some time before complained, that he had been under an inability of thought for a whole day. Hooke, the Roman Historian, and a Roman Catholic (whose ancestor came over with the Duke of Monmouth, and was a prisoner at Sedgemoor) was at hand to recommend a priest to him, from the example of his father, *in articulo mortis*. A nobleman, who has been mentioned as Pope’s neighbour, asked Mr. Hooke, if Pope died a Roman Catholic? “He died, said this attendant, in the *form* of one;” an answer that was received as a jesuitical one: but it is certain, that Popery had our dying poet all to herself. Two lines of his, almost copied from Cowley on Crashaw, charitably pronounce mercy to men of every religion, provided it is not a religion without morality:

“ For

“ For modes of faith let graceless zealots fight ;
His can't be wrong, whose life is in the right.”

The display of the last quotation, carries the writer back, to observe, that Dr. Hurd and the *Adventurer* produce a number of Pope's imitations. “ One sees, says the philosophical critic, that Pope's view, is to surpass his original, which, it is said, was always his way when he imitated.” The *Adventurer*, who, if I do not judge amiss, is the learned, classic Scholar at Winchester, mentions also, with applause, the intention of a Frenchman to compile a treatise “ concerning things that have been said but once ;” which he remarks would be contained in a very small pamphlet. Mr. Lockman, whose laborious application obtained for him the *languages*, and who was a translator for half a century, had once thoughts, as he said, of composing a treatise on *Literary Thefts*. If this offspring of the pen had not been one of the *post nati*, too much of this unoriginal Rhapsody must have found a place there. Lockman, though not praised by Pope, had a portion of his esteem. He dedicated a trans-

lation of a Latin Oration, written by Porée, the Jesuit, in praise of dramatic poetry, to him. By the by, Pope had often the frankincense of dedications to regale himself with, to say nothing of complimentary verses, from the greater and lesser poets. Hooke dedicates his first volume of the Roman History to him, which, he says, was "like hanging out a sign with a great name at the bottom of it, to catch the traveller as he goes by." Though Lockman was by no means the best poet in England, *he was something more, and better*, he was one of the honestest men in it. Though called *the Lamb* among his first literary friends, he had the spirit to reply, to a person who spoke rudely of his poetry, and who had a mark set upon him by Pope, "Thank God! my name is not at full length in the Dunciad!" It were pity that he who composed so many lives in the General Dictionary, should not have one in the Biographia. Thus much is due to one of the first acquaintances this writer was blessed with.— To return to Pope, with whom the pen set out. He did not resist conversion, when it was

was attempted by Atterbury (who was not banished for being a papist) ; nor was he offended when it was mentioned jocularly by others. Nay, I believe, he speaks of his religion with some pleasantry ; and says, in one of his letters to Lord Halifax, after the Accession, “ that he is in the high road to be compleatly ruined, for that he was both a *poet* and a *papist*.” He gently put by all disputations on religious topics.

“ So we believe, because we so are bred,” is a verse from a Catholic poet, and surely may be transcribed by a Protestant. Least of all did Pope affect to make a proselyte. He lived and died a member of the *church* of Rome, but not of the *court* of Rome ; in the distinction of Digby, Lord Bristol, of the last century. Though he had not left his house at Twickenham, in complaisance to the proclamation, and retired to a more decent distance from the capital, just before the breaking-out of the last rebellion, Power would never have laid her persecuting talons upon him. Marcellus ordered the life of Archimedes to be

be spared; though he had defended Syracuse against him : *Peritus in arte non debet mori.*

Alexander, when he was sacking Thebes, such was his regard for Pindar, made no war with his descendents, and spared even the house he lived in. What must Pope have been (if a compliment were always truth) whose "meanest talent was his wit," according to the line of Swift? He intended, as well as pretended, to be "to virtue only and her friends a friend:" neither a slave to the Big-endians nor the Little-endians: one who claimed the title of an honest man, whom in the most beautiful sentence derived from an expression of Plato, he thus characterises,

"*An honest man's the noblest work of God.*"

Happy would it be for every one, who quotes this boasted apophthegm, and it is the fashion to quote it, to write it on the heart as well as on the memory!

Sir William Trumbull seems to have given Pope the first hint of translating the Iliad. He declares to him his opinion of his abilities for that work, from the specimens he had already published. He praises the Rape of
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the Lock ; and says that his Temple of Fame will always stand open for himself. He loved the Muses, and was loved by them. He commended and recommended Pope in the strongest manner. His advice to him, upon his coming up to town, was fatherly and affectionate; to abstain from all the intemperance of clubs, and to take especial care of his health, was his earnest sollicitation. Pope's passions were high, but his constitution checked indulgence. I do not find that he was a water-drinker, nor that it can be said of him, in the praises of Horace, *abstinuit vino et venere*. It is reported that Pope would not have refused the toast at the club ; but that Addison turned his glass up-side-down, and told him, " Pope, you " know you can't drink wine." No man was more beholden to the bottle than Addison. It was then, " when his pulse, was made to beat quicker;" as Steele describes him, he shone with the wit of Terence, when in company with Scipio and Lælius. Burnet observes of Lord Dorset, " till his spirits were elevated " with wine, he was but an ordinary man, " but that drinking dissolved his oppression of
 " phlegm,"

“phlegm,” and enabled him to “set the table in a roar.” Three very small glasses of wine we hear of Pope’s drinking before he left his guests under his own roof at Twickenham, on his going to bed. Waller, the poet, drank no liquor but water; and this is a peculiarity of our great English Philologer. The fun of Trumbull began to set, before Pope’s was appearing in the horizon. He died before Pope left Binfield, who wrote his epitaph, which stands the first in his collection. Anecdote mentions the singularity of Trumbull’s walking on foot to Constantinople, where he was our ambassador. But what was that to the rambles of Coryat, Lithgow, or even of *walking Webbe*? This great walker was also a wit, if he composed the following epigram ascribed to him. It does not cost the reader, nor the transcriber, much. The subject of it is, his pulling off his coat after his arrival at Rome, from England,

“Lie there, thou coat, thro’ various regions tost,
And take that nap which thou so long hast lost!”

May all great men who are worn out in the service of the state, or who are too good for
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the times they live in, retire and enjoy *otium cum dignitate*, with or without a pension, like Sir William Trumbull !

Perhaps it would have been better, if this composition had been in the third person. For, *I, the little hero of each tale*, may offend the otherwise good-natured reader. Chance, more than vanity ("that passion of a little mind and a cold heart," as Dr. Gregory stigmatises it) fell on this mode of narration.— On reciting, in my younger days, the Universal Prayer before Tacitus Gordon (a person formerly much known and much talked of, but whose name will be hardly revived, till it appears alphabetically in the new edition of the *Biographia*), I remember I made a pause after these lines, "That mercy I to others show, that mercy show to me !" It would have been well, says he, if Pope had observed that conduct to others. Can he lay his hand upon his heart, and say, that he has ? He used to say of Pope, that he was a great poet, but a weak reasoner. He alluded to some late conversation that had passed, at Lord Radnor's, on the intolerance of speculative

culative opinions. He remarked, what since makes a figure in print, that to read Pope's epistolary correspondence, you would think that he and his friends possessed all the wit, and wisdom, and honesty in the nation. The public applied the character in the last book of the *Dunciad* to that gentleman,

“Where Tindal dictates, and Silenus snores.”

If Gordon took this to himself, it accounted for what he said of Pope; for no man can talk of a foe as he does of a friend. Pope's subscription to Homer was so great (for he says, that “he found more friends than Homer ever wanted”) that it made his future life independent, and helped “to gild the evening of his day.” He purchased some annuities out of the estate of *John of Bucks*, with his profits from the *Grecian Rhapsodist*, who was obliged to stroll to the halls of the great, to recite his verses, according to Dr. Blackwell, to get his bread, and to obtain a goblet of wine.

Having before me Mr. Wood's Essay on the Original Genius and Writings of Homer, I find a period for transcription. The reader, if he is not too learned, will be pleased to be

told, that the author of it read the Iliad and Odyssey, in the countries where Achilles fought, where Ulysses travelled, and where Homer sung. On his return to England, he was put into parliament, and was employed as Secretary to Lord Chatham, and was so much taken up with public business, that he could not find leisure to compleat *Homer's Travels*. This manly piece of criticism was posthumous, and published by the most learned Mr. Bryant. "Now though it must be acknowledged, that Mr. Pope is the only translator, who has, in a certain degree, kept alive that divine spirit of the poet, which has almost expired in other hands; yet I cannot help thinking, that those, who wish to be thoroughly acquainted, either with the manners and characters of Homer's age, or the landscape and geography of his country, will be disappointed, if they expect to find them in this translation." He accounts for this, by saying, that "Pope endeavoured to accommodate his author to the ideas of those for whom he translates."—If Homer is to talk English again, let him do it in prose.—

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Is it illiberal to remark, that three of the greatest poets the world ever beheld laboured under such personal imperfections as to put them, for sensitive happiness at least, on a level with the meanest peasant? *Gaudeant bene nati!* is quoted by Sir William Temple, with the highest satisfaction. But, as the elegant author of the Origin of Evil observes, and it surely is applicable to Pope, "the sufferings of the sick are greatly relieved by many trifling gratifications imperceptible to others, and sometimes almost repaid by the inconceivable transports occasioned by the return of health and vigour."

Though Pope turned all he wrote into wit and into gold, yet it may be questioned whether Churchill, that able and intrepid satirist (who, as somebody spoke of him, "had the courage to write, what others had not courage to think") did not demand and obtain more money from the booksellers. Mr. Murphy perhaps wishes his personal satires (no mean compositions) to be forgot, with the passions that inflamed them. He can spare that string from his lyre. Churchill tried
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with his political friend, the popular author of the North Briton, "how far the liberty of the press would carry him." His satires were as much read (the first day of publication was almost the sale of an edition); and he had as extensive a field to range in for sport as Pope. His intention was to fetch blood at every stroke. But his weapon was not so sharp as Pope's. His pen, like the sword of Michael the Archangel in Milton, mowed down whole ranks at a time, and inflicted wounds that never closed. The pen of Churchill awakened every character from repose, or that was basking in the sunshine of the court, as Ithuriel did Satan by the touch of his spear. He consulted his companion (who for so many years *rode on the air of whirlwind*) on one of his pieces, who assured him, in alliterative epithets, "that it must succeed, for it was *personal, political, and poetical*."—"This Writer does not care, says a wounded friend, with one of the satires in his hand, how wretched he makes some people for life, for the wanton gratification of a few hours!" Churchill's performances are superior to

Whitehead's (though of his *Manners* Paul printed four thousand copies); but are not comparable to *London*, or to *The Vanity of Human Wishes*. Pope was alive to praise the merits of the first, and Churchill commended them both. The *Prophecy of Famine*, written with the furious spirit of Tyrtæus, might, at a former time, have set the two nations, now good friends, together by the ears. But it was written at the only moment when it could find readers. To finish the idea of Churchill. He was not improperly described in a poem (said to be written by Garrick, who admired and feared him) as going about with a weapon in his hand:

“ ——— to aim a blow,

Impartial bard, at friend and foe.”

From his writings we may retire,

“ ——— finding like a friend,

Something to blame, and something to commend:”
and observe, in the words of Horace on Lucilius, *erat quod tollere velles*. His laurel-tree had more leaves than fruit. The man and the author were very unlike. He lashed as a fatyrift,

satyrift, but forgave as a man. He was not quite a Dorset,

"The best good man, with the worft natur'd Mufe."

Pope's temper was easily ruffled: gales became storms in his bosom. He was both a sensitive plant, and a porcupine. He felt very soon, and raised (at his command) durable feelings in others. He was no stranger to the noble nor ignoble passions, in common with other mortals. Love, ambition, envy, revenge, avarice, compassion, and pride, influenced his actions, and directed his pen. But hold, reader; his great and good qualities outweighed all his selfish and malevolent ones.

"He that is with the fewest faults endow'd,

Is but the best of what can ne'er be good,"

says Smart, in his Horatian Canons of Friendship.

His natural irritability (*for touch me, and no minister so sore*, says Pope) "helped to make the blade wear out its scabbard," as the King of Prussia wrote of Voltaire. Perhaps it is better to be all over feeling, than to be totally without. The understanding itself is

but a downright sluggard, unless roused by the passions. Pope was never married : but not on the suggestion Fontenelle employs on Sir Isaac Newton, because, “ probably, he had not time to think of it.” The dangerous lines against marriage came without impropriety from the character of his Eloisa : but would not have been suitable language for a man who regarded all the laws of his country, and was so great a lover of order in society. Could Pope write so well and so ardently of love, and not be sensible of its effects ? He certainly knew it, by sentiment, by passion, and by appetite. The ridiculous story of Cibber, who cried out, that “ he had saved Homer,” was probably true, though it was not fair to relate it. But it is generally the case with wits, as well as gladiators, neither to give, nor take quarter. The publication of this adventure, and annexing a print to it, stung Pope to the quick. Whether the affection for Miss Blount, which was of the longest date, was purely platonic, “ concerns nor me nor thee to know.” That Lady had a great ascendancy over

over the mind of our poet. He left her the greatest part of his fortune: and, to oblige her, he ungenerously quarrelled with *the Man of Bath*. Cæsar governed the world; but a woman governed Cæsar. An old story, and no new case. The neighbourhood of Twickenham was credulous and censorious, like all country villages. "On eagle's wings immortal scandals fly," says Juvenal, in English. No court of enquiry was set up to gratify the malignity of curiosity. It ought to have been observed before, that it is not agreed whether Addison or Pope were most to blame for their jealousy of each other. The vindication of the conduct of the first has made its appearance in a long note, under his article, in the new edition of the *Biographia*, composed by one who decided, for a great number of years, in points of more difficulty and importance, in Westminster hall. His *philosopher* and *guide*, says Hurd, 'tis well known, stuck close to him, till another and brighter star (*Warburton*) had got the ascendant. Lord Bolingbroke never forgave Pope for leaving him and becoming the pu-

pil of Warburton. Pope afforded a handle, which his old patron seized, to cast a revengeful dishonour upon his memory. For in the case of his conduct to Lord Bolingbroke on the Patriot King (which only told, as Warburton asserts, what every body knew before), Pope certainly could not be justified, even by his advocate. Some anecdotes, printed the other day, of what Bolingbroke said to a Mr. Fraigneau, pointing to the spot in his yard at Battersea, where the fifteen hundred copies, brought thither by the *honest printer* lately mentioned, "were burned in one common fire," in the words of Mallet the editor, shew his unforgiving anger. The offence was no less than a breach of trust, which, as Johnson, *our sturdy moralist*, says, has always something criminal. But Pope possibly saw it in another light. Warburton allows, that Bolingbroke, though the last in pity, was the first in justice to complain. It appears, from the printed letters of his sister, Lady Luxborough, that she joined in the cry against Pope, and gave into her brother's resentments, on this violation

tion of confidence. Was not this treatment injudicious, and too severe against the man who had praised him to the skies ; by whom even his political character was exalted in poetry, whilst it was degraded in history ; to whom his Lordship inscribes so many of his metaphysical essays ; and who was not alive to defend himself ? How highly must Bolingbroke at one time have thought of Pope, when in a letter to Mr. Pouilly (a predecessor of Montesquieu's) he mentions three persons of sufficient knowledge and temper to govern the world, and means himself, Pouilly, and Pope ! How infatuated must his judgement have been, if he could suspect that Pope, for the paltry profit of an edition of his *Patriot King*, could be a traitor to his Patron !

There are two ways of telling a story, and Pope might have told it very differently, or have taken ample revenge. A pen that can whiten, may blacken. A fastidious reader, who is every moment expecting novelties, may exclaim, and perhaps has done it already—"All that I have hitherto read, may be true ; but I have met with it elsewhere."

Let him be satisfied with an answer from Father Paul. "Every book should be as compleat as possible within itself; and should never refer, for any thing material, to other books." The wish of this writer would be, to leave common things to books, as Burnet says of his intentions respecting his history, and to make up their deficiencies.

As there are readers of all sorts, and thousands who are not yet become readers, this volatile performance may have a chance to be taken up, from a parlour window-seat, and occupy an hour of indolence or leisure; and a reader, not acquainted with what others have said upon this subject, may get some information from this piece. There are millions where the English language prevails ("obliged in business or in arts to drudge") to whom little more than the name of Mr. Pope is yet known.—It has been observed, that Pope was never seen to laugh. Johnson asserts of the misanthropic Swift, that he stubbornly *resisted* any tendency to laughter. I cannot recollect, says Mrs. Pilkington, that ever I saw the Dean laugh: perhaps he thought it beneath

neath him ; for when any pleasantry passed, which might have excited it, he used to suck his cheeks to avoid risibility. The people of Iceland, according to Mr. Troil, are remarkably grave, and are hardly ever seen to laugh. Laughter seems to be as effectually banished as by a proclamation. Certainly Pope was neither Heraclitus nor Democritus. He had never been in the Cave of Trophœnius, nor perhaps thought it beneath the dignity of a great man to laugh, as Lord Chesterfield asserts it to be. “ I am sure, since I have had the full use of my reason, says that polite nobleman to his son, to whom he writes the sentiments of his heart, nobody has heard me laugh.” Pope was naturally serious and calm, except when he put on the *Sardonic* smile.

Of all the wits and authors of his acquaintance, it is apparent, that Pope was the fondest of Gay ; and with the greatest reason, for he had the least to apprehend from him : For in all cases, where there is fear, there can be no love. And yet, says Mrs. Pilkington, Pope could not forbear, in his Letters to Swift,

a great

a great many satirical, or, if I may be allowed to say so, envious remarks on the success of the Beggar's Opera. The Dean very frankly owned, he did not think Mr. Pope was so candid to the merits of other writers as he ought to have been. This female editor of anecdotes informs her readers (and many she had when her little volumes came out) that Swift shewed her a letter he had lately received from Pope, filled, says she, with low and ungentlemanlike reflections on Gay and his new and noble patrons. She told the Dean, she was sorry to read it, for she had reason *now* to think, there was no such thing as a sincere friend in the world. "Why," replies Swift, authors are as jealous of their prerogatives as Kings ("bear like a Turk no brother near the throne," says Pope, who borrowed the allusion from Lord Bacon, when he applied it to Addison) and can no more endure a rival in the empire of wit, than a monarch in his dominions." Is this an authoress of an Atalantis, or is she only a Cassandra, delivering disagreeable truths? Pope read over several of Gay's pieces, with the
pen

pen of correction in his hand, before they were sent to the press; and he is known to have assisted him in two of his productions. It is evident from the papers of Mr. Spence (which were generously intrusted by the Duke of Newcastle to the use of the last biographer of our poets) that Swift suggested the first hint that gave rise to the Beggar's Opera, to which Pope and he contributed something. The song of "Virgins are like the fair flower in its lustre" (imitated, if not improved from Catullus and Ariosto) is ascribed to him. It is no wonder this performance was so much commended by Swift and Pope, as they both had a hand in it. We are often more happy in adoption than creation. All the imitations of the Beggar's Opera are poor things; Gay's own second part of Polly not excepted. What Ariosto says of Zerbino may be pronounced of Gay, with regard to this performance:

"When Nature made him she destroy'd the mould."

Gay took ample revenge on the court, and flung himself and his wit and humour into the hands of its enemies. This Opera,
which

which also was meant as a burlesque on Italian Operas, continued a fashionable satire against courtiers. The neglect of the minister to accommodate Gay with a handsome place was as pernicious to the men at the helm, as Mazarine's refusal of a regiment to prince Eugene, to the interests of Lewis XIV. according to Voltaire. This piece has done no service to the cause of morality. The songs, which have the stings of lampoons, were applied to the most melodious tunes that could be found. On the stage, in the streets, and at the table, they had a marvellous effect on the ear, and on the passions. The effect was so uncommon, that the observation in the mouth of one of the interlocutors in Fletcher of Saltoun's celebrated Conversation-piece, seems not to be quite a rant, that, "if a man were permitted to make all the ballads, he need not care who should make the laws of a nation;" for manners controul laws. Though it has been said of this opera an hundred times, it must be said once more, that, "it made *Gay* rich, and *Rich* gay." There is more satire than
 comedy

comedy in the Three Hours after Marriage, in which Pope assisted Gay to ridicule Fofsil Woodward. The indiscretion of Cibber in raising a laugh, in the character of Bayes, on a scene in that play, which Pope took to himself, incurred the indignation of our poet, and placed the Laureate, in fulness of time, on the throne of the Dunces, in the room of Theobald, much to the disadvantage of the Dunciad. Every body felt the consequence of enraging the Lion. Our poet gave warning first, and made good his promise, to punish every animal that insulted him. Take it in his own couplet :

“ Whoe’er offends, at some unlucky time
Slides into verse, and hitches in a rhyme.”

The party zeal that Cibber displayed in his Nonjuror (which made his fortune) helped to set the poetical combustibles of our Twickenham bard on fire. Thus began his abhorrence of the men of the theatre, whom he meant to wound through the sides of Cibber; for he considers him, as

“ Knight of the shire to represent them all.”

Ber-

Betterton, and Booth, and Wilks, had had *their hour upon the stage*, and were gone. Of their successors he was either ashamed (to be their terror was reserved for Churchill) or he had received disobligations from them. By this time he certainly had given up all thoughts of writing for the theatre, if he ever entertained any. Perhaps at this time he meditated the epic poem in honour of his own country. Of the gentlemen of the Sock and Buskin he was glad to say,

“The players and I are luckily no friends.”

In the first edition it was,

“Cibber and I, &c.”

and he meant to continue his dislike, when he wrote,

“*Unelbow'd* by a gamester, pimp, or player.”

It does not appear that Pope frequented the theatres in the last years of his life. But, according to Mr. Davies (the entertaining biographer of Mr. Garrick) Lord Orrery prevailed upon him to see Garrick (at Goodman's-fields playhouse) when he broke out, as it has been applied to Waller, like the Irish rebellion,

thirty

thirty thousand strong, in one of his popular characters. "I am afraid, says Pope (who could see many a Roscius and Æsopus in one Garrick) that the young man will be spoiled, for he will have no competitor."

The approbation of Pope was certainly conveyed to our young actor (whose elation of mind on the occasion might be equal to that of the Rhetorician when Plato honoured him with his company) which might make him think that *Pope himself was an audience*. Garrick was already in possession of the public favour, which no man ever took more pains to obtain or to preserve. To excell in his profession, he desired the severity of observation and criticism upon every character he appeared in; in the good sense of Pope's rule,

"Your defects to know,
"Make use of every friend and every foe."

But we must not lose sight of Cibber as Yet. He did not take the necessary steps to prevent the future retaliation of Pope. He found Pope in a passion behind the scenes, and left him in it. He might think himself

impenetrable to his satire. Pope gave himself more pain than he occasioned in Cibber. The blows on Buckhorfe always recoiled on the striker. The poet perhaps was the viper, and the player the file, in the fable. The Goddess of Impudence always laughs at the God of Wit. Colley Cibber, with all his dramatic and theatrical merit, was certainly a coxcomb. His superciliousness to actors and to authors is upon record. His contemptuous refusal of the Beggar's Opera, and his substitution of his own uninteresting Damon and Phillida, are proofs of his bad taste and of his vanity. His history of the stage is above the praise of this pen (indeed all good writings are above criticism, as bad ones are below it) and prevents posterity from believing him guilty of the imputation of dulness, though not of pertness. His observations on the life and conduct of Cicero are entertaining and sensible.

Pope, who had done, as he thought and intended, so much service to Shakspeare, by putting out an edition of his plays, interested himself in the erecting his statue in Westminster-

minster-abbey, in 1741. The success on the revival of some of his plays excited the gratitude of the Patentees (Fleetwood and Rich) to employ Kent and Scheemaker for that purpose. The Biographia asserts, that "the excellent monument of Shakspeare was owing to Pope, who thus made amends to Shakspeare for the edition of his plays." He was undoubtedly called upon for an inscription. He had exercised his talent in this way for the obelisk in Orange Grove at Bath, on the importunity of Beau Nash. It is very likely his taste and judgement were consulted by the artists, for the attitude of the *figure*. There was some contention amongst the grammarians on this occasion (as heretofore about the *lapidary language* to be placed on the Capitol, rebuilt by the Consul Catulus); but Pope would not come over to the opinion of Dr. Mead, who thought the proposed inscription of *Amor publicus posuit*, inelegant and unclassical. When the Doctor gave up the contest, he did it in the Virgilian line, the first part of which is a truism,

Omnia vincit Amor, & nos cedamus amori.

K

Gar-

Garrick, who made his fame and his fortune by the help of Shakspeare (there needs no Ghost to tell us that, it is whispered in my ear) illuminated his plays, and made them better understood as well as more admired. He *personated* his characters so excellently on the stage, that he seemed to convert the theatrical fiction into reality, in the imagination of the audience, and was carried out of himself in his own fancy. Several years afterward, he erected a temple, to the *God of his idolatry*, at his villa at Hampton, and placed a marble statue of him (by Rysbach) under the dome, at the expence of five hundred pounds. Pope did not live to see the dedication of this temple, nor the glories of Garrick,

The pen, impatient reader, is almost at the end of its ramble. Though, to use the coarse words of Bentley, "I may neither be leaner by censure, nor plumper by commendation;" yet, I am not without hope, we may part good friends. For the Rhapsodist (*he seeks no better name*) has no intention of giving offence to the smallest or the greatest

per-

person alive, nor of praising the dead at the expence of the living. He had rather be permitted to step forward with the bold reply made use of by the young peasant in the celebrated castle of Otranto, *I have offended no good angel; and I am afraid of no ill one.*

Pope was never out of the kingdom, though he languished to travel abroad. "Who've seen but little, can't have much to say"—at least of foreign countries. For this purpose he put out to sea, from Southampton, with Lord Peterborough, by way of experiment, but was disordered by the sickness incident to that element, like Virgil in the Bay of Naples, and glad to retire back again.

We should not perhaps be inquisitive to know, in relation to any other poet, whether he rode any horse besides Pegasus. Pope throws a great deal of humour into a letter to Lord Burlington, about 1715, containing the conversation between him and Lintot, who overtook our Bard as he was riding upon a mare of his Lordship's in Windsor Forest, and desired to accompany him to Oxford. "The motion, said the poet to his bookfeller,

as they are jogging on, aids my fancy : a round trot very much awakens my spirits, &c. &c." Their appearance on the road might have afforded a picturesque subject for a Hogarth or a Bunbury. For Pope thus describes the group. "My man before (a proof he was no good horseman), my courteous stationer beside (in all the eagerness of making proposals to his author), and the *aforesaid Devil* behind," with Pope's cloak-bag, and his master's portmanteau,

Pope lived to the age of fifty-six. Whilst he was sensible of the hourly decay of his mortal faculties, he was talking to his surrounding friends of new proofs for the immortality of his own soul. He had lived continually amongst the great,

"No pimp of pleasure, and no spy of state," as he assures us ; but he did not choose to be beholden to them for assistance in the last sad office. His vanity was to end with his life, *nor nod in sable plumes*. He directed, that he should be carried to the grave at Twickenham by twelve poor men of that place. All that was perishable of him expired on May 30,

1744. The Bishop of Gloucester, who survived Pope to 1780, erected a monument to him in Twickenham Church. He remembered his servant John Searl, for his fidelity, in his will, with a pecuniary legacy. If it were not too ludicrous to mention it, he fared better than poor Gil Blas, from the legacy of the old canon Sedillo. Our son of Apollo and the Muses, if mythology is not now impertinence, performed all the filial duties to his earthly parents, and was sorry when their departure put an end to his pious labours. "They dropped, like mellow fruit, that ripened long." Horace praises his father for the good education he gave him, and for bringing him into the conversation of young men of quality. Our Poet's commendations are as just and as generous. What parents would not wish for such a son! what son would not wish for such parents! He mentions them both very frequently in his poems and his letters; and composed a sepulchral inscription for them in Twickenham-church. An epitaph from thence made its appearance in the news-paper, the other

day, written by Pope, upon his nurse (Margaret Beach) which records her attendance upon him for 38 years. Her name deserves to be known, as much as the nurse of Ulysses and of Æneas. She did more, by her daily and her nightly care, "*To help him through that long disease his life,*" than Dr. Arbuthnot, to whom the line is addressed. A sentiment, I must observe, evidently copied from Hippocrates: *Ὅλος ἀνθρώπος ἐν γυναικὶ νοσῶς ἐστίν.* Dr. Swift buried, and wrote a lapidary inscription on an honest servant, whom Lord Chesterfield affects to call an *humble friend*. The good deserve an epitaph, as well as the great. Mr. Richardson preserved a multitude of friendly short letters, and message cards, that Pope's familiarity daily honoured him with. These were purchased at the auction, with his manuscript Essay. They may be preserved as reliques, but ought not to be exhibited in that large museum the world. An author, says Moore, before his *Female Fables*, is the reverse of all other objects: he magnifies at a distance, but diminishes at approach. Life cannot be every moment employed

ployed in important matters. Great geniuses perform common things in the common manner. Only it is worth their while, not to be seen engaged in trifles. "Do you wish to know, says Shenstone, what Mr. Pope was about when I saw him last? To the best of my remembrance, says he, he was paring his nails." — "Does Newton, asks a foreign nobleman, eat and drink and sleep, like other mortals?" Just as other people; for he had no particularities nor singularities, as a man. To draw to a conclusion; the court of Parnassus went into mourning for him. But none did more honour to his memory than Mr. Mason; "who got, by giving praise." His Monody, called Musæus, shewed the author a happy imitator of Chaucer, Spenser, Milton, and Pope. The title-page was adorned with a drawing, by that old practitioner in elegant groups of conversation figures, Mr. Hayman, expressive of the visit of his brother Poets, to the expiring bard, who is attended by Virtue. All Mr. Pope's poetical pieces have been repeatedly translated into all the European languages. Probably (as Denham

says in general of translations) "much may be lost in the transfusion." If there is half the difficulty in the translating of Pope as of Shakspeare, it is better for their admirers to learn the language at once, and understand the original. English is become a fashionable language. It is more talked, as well as more studied, since we became so great a people. Of Shakspeare and Pope, the thought is but the half that can be given; the expression must be totally unknown. Most translators, like Hannibal Caro, as expressed by Dryden, "are foot poets, who lacquey by the side of their original, but never mount behind him." Perhaps Camoens and Tasso would thank my two friends, Mickle and Hoole, for the justice done them: their translations read like originals. The works of Pope are to be met with in every library in Europe.

This Sketch is become the more tedious to the reader, on account of a rainy day; a circumstance for which Lord Falkland pities all unlearned gentlemen. In my own defence, I detained the pen in my hand some time longer. It is composed by one who has received

ceived great pleasure from the poems of Mr. Pope, though they neither found nor made him a poet. He has not the enthusiastic veneration to commemorate his birth-day, as Silius Italicus did that of Virgil, according to Pliny; but he has constantly before his eyes his volumes in his book-room, with a good print of him by Pond and Houbraken; together with a correct drawing of the villa and the grotto, which were actually taken in the life-time of Mr. POPE.

A D D I T I O N.

IT is certified to me this moment by my acquaintance (whose name I will not take the liberty to mention) that Pope, whilst living with his father at Chiswick, before he went to Binfield, took great delight in Cock-fighting (a diversion the humane King of Denmark expressed his dislike to, whilst he was amongst us) ; and laid out all his school-boy money, and little perhaps it was, in buying fighting cocks. From this passion, but surely not the play of a child, his mother had the dexterity to wean him. A judgement is not to be formed of our infant poet's disposition, from his attachment to this cruel, though not uncommon pastime. He afterwards found in the course of his profession as an author (which he said " was a continual state of warfare upon earth," the justness of the line in his friend Gay's fables) that

" Wits are game cocks to one another."

A D D I T I O N to Page 62.

In a note at the bottom of page 342 of Ruffhead's Life of Pope (probably from the communication of Warburton) I have just found, that Pope intended to have given a *versification* of two or three of Bishop Hall's satires, as he had done of Dr. Donne's. "Hall being a mere academic, had not his vein vitiated, like Donne's, by living at courts and at large." In the first edition, says the notator, which was in Pope's library, we find that long satire, called the first of the sixth book, entirely corrected, and the versification mended, to fit it for his use. He intitles it, in the beginning of his corrections, by the name of *Sat. Opt.*

The satires of Dr. Young must somewhere be mentioned. Their author was always under the guidance of Pope. Young advised with him to the last, and sent him the manuscript of the first book of his *Night Thoughts* for his approbation (says his book-feller)

feller) who earnestly recommended it for publication. What Swift said of his *Love of Fame* was not unjust, "that it should have been more merry, or more severe." (Be civil, but severe, said old Lenthal of Burford to a counsel he employed in a particular cause.) His satires have been called a string of epigrams. Not a grain of malignity is to be found there. The laughter of comedy now and then breaks out. The attack is rather upon folly than vice. The author was at this time a lay-man, and a man of the world; and became a candidate for a seat in parliament, upon the interest of the famous Duke of Wharton. His satires please better on the first than the second reading, and abound with lines, that seem to be written with a diamond instead of a pen.

Dr. Young says of himself in his *Night Thoughts*,

"I've been so long remember'd I'm forgot."

However neglected for a long term, he was appointed to succeed Dr. Hales, as Clerk of the Closet to the Princess Dowager.

A D D I T I O N to Page 86.

Dr. Moore (in his entertaining volumes of a View of Society and Manners in Italy) gives us an account of the poetical *Rehearsers* of that country, whose tones and gestures are vehement and theatrical, and of the *Improvisatori* Poets. These performers are much admired by some persons at Rome, which abounds with them. For my part, says our traveller, from the nature of the thing, I should imagine they are but indifferent. It is said, the Italian is peculiarly calculated for poetry, and that verses may be made with more facility in this, than in any other language. It may be more easy to find smooth lines, and make them terminate in a rhyme in Italian than in any language: but to compose verses, with all the qualities essential to good poetry, I imagine leisure and long reflection are requisite. Indeed, I understand from those who are judges, that “these extempore compositions of the *Improvisatori*

visatori are in general but mean productions, consisting of a few fulsome compliments to the company, and some common-place observations, put into rhyme, on the subject proposed. There is however a lady at Rome, Signiora Corilla, whose extempore productions are admired by people of taste."—The performances of these persons, as explained by this acute observer, have not the merit nor the difficulty that might be apprehended.

Just before this leaf went to the press, the wonder (for wonder on most occasions is another word for ignorance) about extempore Italian versification vanished from the writer. For a friend, who is very ready in the living and the dead languages, poured forth a torrent of this species of Italian metre, that evinces it to be rather mechanical than a genuine inspiration. Who would wish for extempore Bards of our own nation? Versification is but the leaves of poetry, and not the fruit. Let us have poetry from the pen, and not from the mouth. The tongue that goes without thinking, with the fluency of the versifier, runs the faster, in the known
com-

comparison of the race-horse, in proportion to the little weight it carries. Easy verses, as old Wycherley said wittily, are easily written. Mr. Pope thought twice, before he committed any thing to paper, and transcribed it often before he gave it to the press. Three or four impromptu epigrams have Pope's name to them; but they are subjects chosen, and not dictated. He was not a poet, *stans pede in uno*. "Lord Fanny spins a thousand such a day," who is the *Improvisatori* poet whom we do not want among us; for his effusion, Pope probably thus would characterise,

"It is not poetry, but prose run mad."

F I N I S.

comparison of the two, in proportion to the little weight it carries. And, worse, as old Wycherley indignantly, and somewhat correctly, Mr. Pope thought twice, before he committed any thing to paper, and immediately after he gave it to the press. Three or four impromptu epigrams have Pope's name to them; but they are subjects chosen, and not dictated. He was not a poet, but a man. "I told Paddy once a short and such a day," who is the last of the poets whom we do not want among us; for his effusion, I hope, probably this would be, "it is not poetry, but prose run mad."